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Andrzej Panufnik

Composers and Commissars

ON Andrzej Panufnik, *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* reports as follows: *Born Warsaw, 24th September 1914. Polish conductor and composer. His father, Tomasz, was a violin maker; his mother, an Englishwoman, Mathilda Thonnes, a pupil of Barcewicz in Warsaw, an accomplished violinist and composer. The musical atmosphere of the house strongly affected his sensitive nature and he entered K. Sikorski's composition class at the Warsaw Conservatory, which he left with distinction in 1936. He continued his studies under Weingartner in Vienna, obtaining the diploma of the State Academy of Music in 1938. He became conductor of the Cracow Philharmonic Orchestra in 1945 and the next year he was appointed to the post of director of the Warsaw Filharmonia. As a guest conductor he appeared in Berlin, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Paris and London. He was elected vice-chairman of the International Music Council of UNESCO (Paris).*

His Five Folksongs were performed at the ISCM Festival in London (1946) and the Lullaby at that of Amsterdam (1948). The "Tragic" Overture was first performed by Stokowski at Carnegie Hall, New York, on 24th March 1949, and the Sinfonia Rustica won the first prize at the Chopin Centenary Competition in Warsaw the same year.

As a composer Panufnik belongs to the most advanced group of Polish modernists. His works include the following: Uwertura tragiczna ("Tragic" Overture) (1942); Five Folksongs for treble voices and 5 woodwind instruments, English translation by J. Sliwinski; Nocturne for orchestra (1947); Lullaby for 29 string instruments and 2 harps; Sinfonia Rustica (1949); Suita Polska for soprano and pf., based on Polish folk airs from Masovia (1949); "Heroic" Overture (1950); Old Polish Suite for strings (1951).

This summary of Mr. Panufnik's life and work needs to be supplemented by the following, newer information: He conducted at two concerts in Zürich on the 10th and 11th July, 1954, after which he was ordered to return to Poland. Instead he fled to England, where he requested and has received political asylum.—ED.

IT WAS in Poland a few years ago that I read *The Captive Mind* by Czeslaw Milosz (for this book circulated clandestinely among writers and artists), and in it I found, for the first time, a really true and penetrating interpretation of the psychological trials of the artist under a Communist régime. The feeling that certain changes can never be reversed, the forcefulness of the myth of "History," the instinct of self-preservation—all these have profoundly motivated writers and artists who have been trying to go on working in Poland during the last decade. In his book, Milosz stresses the great intellectual "temptation" of the "new faith" for those under its domination; but it seems to me that this is only one aspect of the situation. I do not think most Polish artists feel the temptation very greatly, although superficially they may appear to conform to the Party line—perhaps only through lassitude. Of course, the writer is particularly vulnerable, because he deals with ideas, and he has the most obvious political usefulness. In other fields of art, particularly music, the problems are more complex. Perhaps only a description of the actual living and working conditions of the Polish artist (I shall, of course, refer chiefly to musicians) can convey the nature and extent of this complexity.

Relations between the Association of Polish Composers and the Government are not very good. Out of about 120 Polish composers, there are at present only two Party members. This does not make life easy for the Polish composer.

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I have noticed that in the West there is an impression that material conditions for artists in the Communist countries are good. It is generally believed that their creative work is limited by censorship, but that at least the artist is safe from material worries. Nothing could be further from the truth. The struggle for the artist to obtain even a minimum standard of living is extremely wearing. Composers are dependent on the Committee for musical commissions, which lays down the time in which a work must be written, and fixes the fee. To take a concrete example: two years are usually allotted for writing a symphony, but the fee is hardly sufficient to live on for two months. Therefore, in order to live, the composer must continually find odd work—film music, music for "mass singing," and music for the radio. Since the fees are about the same for everyone, this system is hardest on the serious composers. The second-rate, lacking both talent and scruples, manage very well; they write music by the yard for films, and turn out mass songs by the dozen.

Under the German occupation the Polish artist lived in a united society, in which the hope of imminent liberation was alive, and he was at least able to work freely in secret. I do not believe that there are now in Poland any artists who are able to work in that way. Today there is really no way for the artist other than submission to the Party. In theory it seems possible that an artist could give up his creative work, at any rate publicly, and become an ordinary worker. In actual fact he cannot. Not only because it is usually impossible to be creative and work in a mine or factory at the same time, but also because an artist who gave up his vocation would immediately become suspect. He would be considered an "enemy of the people." And from that moment he would not find any work, no matter how arduous.

THE position of the composer is particularly difficult. The writer can always turn his talents to translation, philology, and the whole technical side of literature. The composer can only compose music, and, as long as he does so, he is forced to obey the rules imposed upon him. It is very difficult to describe them and to show the mechanism of censorship. The rules themselves are defined in so elementary and vague a fashion that they really are empty of meaning. Censorship exists throughout the entire system, it is part of the living substance —so it is difficult to say exactly where it has had most effect.

First of all, what are the rulings covered by the well-known "socialist realism" clichés? "Formalism" is banned. However, the term "formalism" itself is empty of meaning—or, rather, it can be used in every possible sense to cover the needs of the moment. At present, "formalism" in Poland means any musical composition which is not political propaganda, and which in any way resembles contemporary Western music. Much is said by official spokesmen about the need for a "new musical language," directly accessible to the masses. In actual fact, instead of a new language being found, the outdated one of the 19th century has been resurrected. The easiest way has been chosen, and the music the public is accustomed to hear has been encouraged. In one of my articles published in *The Times* after my departure from Poland last year, I said that the music which is encouraged is the music most pleasing to the ear of a workman or peasant without any musical training. This phrase was quoted in Poland in order to accuse me of "despising" the working class. But isn't it really despising them to exclude all possibility of forming a subtler musical taste, and to give the people only music which is facile, false, and vulgar?

As I have already said, censorship is so much a part of the system itself that it would never occur to anyone, for example, to submit a project to the Committee unless it already conformed to the general principles in vogue. It is as well to dedicate the work, at least by its title, to some political event or tendency. Sometimes pressure is exerted (very subtly) to persuade someone to compose a certain work. Those members of the Association of Composers who are Party members are naturally in close contact with the cultural section of the Party. They even have the authority to suggest the composition of certain

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works. For a long time the Party was insistent that a cantata in Stalin's honour should be written, but no one felt inclined to celebrate the "Father of the People." Eventually one of the Communist composers had to carry out the order. He did it according to all the rules of the game; the text chosen was extremely adulatory, the music itself free from "pre-war taints," and it was "simple and in keeping with the socialist epoch." The cantata was performed solemnly, the Party was pleased, and the critics were enthusiastic. But not long after, Stalin died. Overnight the cult of the individual was banished, and the merits of collective rule were vaunted. The famous cantata will never again be performed.

Another great problem is the absolute isolation of music—and all the other arts—in Poland. All the "socialist realism" clichés are only a pretext. The real aim is to separate Poland, culturally, from the West. All the slogans about art, "national in its form, and socialist in its content" have no basis in reality, and serve merely to encourage a climate of hypocrisy and depression in the artistic world. It is particularly tragic for Polish artists, for Polish culture was so much a part of the main Western stream. They continue to be deeply interested in Western culture, but the extent of their isolation from it is unimaginable here. Our young musicians do not even know about the things they are ordered to avoid in their work. Not only is twelve-tone music unknown to them, but so are Stravinsky and the *Groupe des Six*; and, of course, all the most recent experiments in Western music—whatever their intrinsic value—are totally unheard of. Contemporary Western music is never played at concerts, nor is it available on records, and it is almost impossible to hear symphonic or chamber music on the radio. Wireless sets in Poland are poor, and broadcasts from Western stations are jammed, because of the political news. It is really impossible to find out what is going on in Western music. The only music magazine in Poland is a faithful copy of the *Sovietskaia Muzika*. It reprints Soviet articles, and publishes long, boring studies of the lives of the classical Slavonic composers. In the West, most *avant-garde* experiments are received with relative scepticism; there may be a handful of enthusiasts, but the public is more or less indifferent. However, in the peculiar cultural atmosphere of Poland, certain *avant-garde* forms seem to have an explosive force. They are condemned so violently that one has the impression that the "international camp of Peace" would be imperilled by a concert of *musique concrète* or an exhibition of abstract art. Paradoxically, this categorical censorship restores our romantic faith in the power of art.

ALTHOUGH the censorship is hard to define (since it is so deeply rooted in the system itself), one has the impression that no censor's office could be as effective as the thousand and one difficulties, the pressures, and the contradictions which the Polish artist meets at every step.

It is not the direct action of the Party or the régime which makes independent, original creation impossible, but the everyday living and working conditions. There is the impossibility of complete concentration, and the personal isolation. As soon as an artist has done some noteworthy work, and particularly if he is known in the West, he becomes a public man, and he is forced to play a political role.

We all belonged to numerous committees, and we were made to feel like Government employees, obliged to carry out any order, at any time. The celebrations, inaugurations, and meetings were countless. I myself sat on several committees, which wasted an enormous amount of my time, and disturbed my concentration. I was Vice-President of the Association of Composers, I was a member of the Artistic Council at the Ministry of Culture and Arts, the Committee for Cultural Relations Abroad, and the Polish Committee for the Defence of Peace. I was not a Party member, but there was no question of refusing to sit on any of these committees. This forced me to make statements more or less contrary to my private opinions, and indeed such statements were particularly demanded of me, as I was not a Party member.

(I should like to mention the Committee for the Defence of Peace. All the leading personalities from every walk of life had to belong

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to it. Poland has suffered from so many wars that it was not difficult to persuade us to "defend the peace." It seemed, too, the least compromising way of collaborating with the régime. However, no one in Poland now is ignorant of the Committee's aims. I know that its activity in the West consists of Communist infiltration and penetration. Its work in the Communist countries seems to me even further from its ostensible purposes. Its propaganda is designed exclusively to incite the people to hate the West, and to convince them that the West, and particularly the Americans, are preparing for another war. It is hard to imagine anything less "peaceful" and "brotherly.")

The political verdict on a composition is given, in theory, after a private hearing—if it ever reaches that stage. The special performance is followed by a discussion of the work, in which the composer participates, together with a representative of the Association of Composers and representatives of the Ministry of Culture and the Party. In fact, the authorities know what verdict they will give before the performance; they have their advisers. The criteria of appreciation are complex. The "political moment" is dominant, but that is variable, according to the latest articles in the Soviet music magazines. There is also the personal element, the friendships, rivalries, and jealousies.

I remember the discussion which took place after the special performance at Katowice of my *Heroic Overture*. Besides the officials, three of the most eminent Polish musicians were invited. My composition was attacked on the grounds that it was not suitable for the socialist epoch. One of the participants declared that he and his friends had wanted to render me the service of burning my score before my arrival at Katowice. None of the three musicians dared to defend me, but immediately after the discussion they came to see me to express their indignation at the attacks made on me. I could not be angry with them for not having defended me publicly. One of the most monstrous aspects of the régime is that it brings to the surface the worst in men.

Cowardice, and continual fear, have become so much a part of life that the attempts at "liberalisation" following Stalin's death met with an unexpected reaction. It was said, in artistic circles, that it was simply a manœuvre. "Liberalisation" was initiated in Poland in March 1954, at a meeting of the Artistic Council at the Ministry of Culture. After Stalin's death, changes were expected. Perhaps partly for that reason, and also in imitation of Soviet attempts, the Government tried to conciliate the artists, who were embittered and exhausted after struggling for five years against "formalism." Both the quality and the quantity of their work had gradually deteriorated. The Minister of Culture, Sokorski, opened the meeting with a self-criticism. He encouraged writers and artists to speak freely, and after some initial hesitation, a few did speak. "Must we continue to fight against formalism? Can we criticise Soviet works when they deserve it?" Sokorski's reply was evasive. However, in the official account of the proceedings which appeared in the press, Sokorski's statement on formalism was changed into yet another categoric denunciation, and there was no mention of the criticism of Soviet works. At the meeting, as at similar meetings, young Communist composers violently attacked any attempt towards liberalisation. One of the most untalented composers, a young man whose political enthusiasm had greatly aided his career, declared that a more liberal attitude would be harmful, because Polish artists had not yet achieved sufficient political maturity, and still needed careful guidance. His reaction was most understandable. The present system is ideal for those with only limited ability, for their work is published, performed and praised entirely on its political "merits." Liberalisation would be dangerous for these young men.

"Liberalisation" did not last long. In the spring of 1954 there was a cabaret in Warsaw where some very daring witticisms could be heard. They were, of course, directed (as all criticism under this régime) against the bureaucrats, the bad executors of excellent orders—for the régime itself is perfect. (This method of criticism reminded me of feudal times: complaints were made against the bailiff, for the landlord was unimpeachable and would soon

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stop the iniquitous practices if he knew of them.) The cabaret was a sensation, and people listened, slightly uncomfortably, not knowing if they could laugh, savouring its provocations. But after a few weeks all the offending passages were cut out by the censor.

MY OWN position as a composer in Poland was fairly complex. I received many awards, I was often sent abroad, my compositions were played over the radio in broadcasts to foreign countries—but my music was usually condemned at home.

For instance, my *Sinfonia Rustica* received first prize at the Chopin Competition in Warsaw in 1949; but a year later, at a meeting of the Association of Composers, in the presence of Sokorski and some Soviet delegates, including Khrenikov, the General Secretary of the Association of Soviet Composers, one of my Polish colleagues violently attacked my symphony. Apparently it was alien to the great socialist era. I should add that the previous year this man had been a member of the jury which awarded me the Chopin prize. After this attack, Sokorski declared to the whole meeting that my *Sinfonia Rustica* no longer existed.

My *Symphony of Peace*, written in 1950, was awarded the State Prize; even so, it was condemned, on the ground that signs of "religious feeling" were found in it. I was reproached, to quote the critics, for "praying for peace" in this composition, instead of "fighting for peace." Pernicious attitude. . . . The future of my "formalist" compositions, therefore, could hardly be brilliant. I conducted my *Lullaby* for strings and two harps at the Amsterdam Festival in 1948. It has often been performed abroad, but it was only heard once in Poland. It often happens that a composition is only played once, just so that it cannot be said in the West that it has been banned in Poland. There is no list of forbidden works, as there was under the German occupation. They are simply never played.

I have briefly described the position of a composer in Poland, but my description holds for anyone in the musical world. I would go as far as to say that an attempt is being made, by all sorts of methods, to make people hate music. Good music is not available to those who want it and love it, and in its most vulgar form it is continually imposed by the loud-speakers blaring everywhere—in the streets, in offices, and in the holiday centres. It is a nightmare approaching Orwell's *1984*. The music is always in keeping with the "present stage of the party-line"—mass songs and a vulgar version of pseudo-popular music. The mass songs are either music of a military character, supposed to be stirring, or else the worst kind of sentimental music, a rehash of the most vulgar, sugary, pre-war songs—except that love and jealousy are replaced by tractors and stakhanovites.

The craze for loud-speakers has come from the U.S.S.R. In 1948 I travelled on a Soviet train between Warsaw and Berlin. I was hardly asleep when the most frightful music woke me. My fellow traveller, a Soviet officer, did all he could to get the radio turned off, but it was impossible, and we had to listen to the same records over and over again until the end of the journey. Another time I was in an office discussing some music I had been commissioned to write. There was a loud-speaker in the room. The noise was so painful that the official I was talking to went into a fit of temper, and threw everything he could lay hands on at the loud-speaker until he silenced it.

The same records are always played, and there are hardly any recordings of symphonic or chamber music. Polish musicians are not indifferent to this state of affairs, and often try, unsuccessfully, to remedy it. At a concert devoted to the music of Szymanowski, the orchestra and the choir undertook, at their own expense, a tape recording of *Stabat Mater*, one of his most beautiful compositions. When I wished to use this tape recording for producing records, I took the matter up at the Ministry of Culture, and was asked to forget about it. The explanation was that some Polish reactionaries had organised the whole thing as a plot to have a composition of a religious nature on records.

I have already mentioned the disappearance of chamber music in Poland. Concerts of classical chamber music are never given, anywhere. I remember my envy when, at the

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Brussels Festival, I saw posters announcing the performance of the seventeen quartets by Beethoven. Although this form attracts me very much, during these last years I have only been able to write one piece of chamber music, and this had to be under the pretext that it was for educational purposes, as an exercise for the Warsaw Conservatory. The reason for the disgrace of chamber music is simply that it has little political use.

Although the standard of musical education was not particularly high in pre-war Poland, there was nevertheless an astonishing amount of young talent. It needed training, but this is being neglected today. Even singing lessons in the ordinary schools have been abolished. There are fourteen symphony orchestras at present in Poland, all organised after the war, with pre-war instrumentalists. As these retire or die, there are no properly trained musicians to replace them.

IN EVERY aspect of musical life, as in every aspect of life itself, the Soviet influence is enormous. The Soviet system is gradually being imposed in Poland, although, for reasons of time alone, things have gone much further in the U.S.S.R., as I saw for myself during a recent visit to Moscow. It is not easy to go from Poland to Russia. It can only be done by going as an official delegate. It is actually relatively easier for a Pole to go to Paris or London. There is more than one Iron Curtain in Europe.

The position of composers in Russia is tragic. Since the Zhdanov decrees, nothing new or interesting has appeared in Soviet music. The Association of Soviet Composers has 1200 members, but only a few of them rise above the level of mediocrity. The general decline in standards which has begun to take effect in Poland has already ravaged Russia. When I met Shostakovitch, whom I found in a terrible state of nervous depression, there was no chance to talk to him alone, freely. The most derogatory term in Soviet musical criticism is "originality." A Ukrainian composer once asked me to describe a recent Polish composition. I told him it had been written for strings, percussion instruments, and celeste. He laughed ironically and said "Originality, at any price. . . ." He did not even know that this combination had been used by Bartok twenty years ago. Nationalism and chauvinism run riot in Soviet musical life. I read recently in *The Sunday Times* that during his visit to England, Khachaturan stated that no compositions were banned in Russia. This is only true legally, in the same way as free speech is guaranteed under the Soviet constitution.

Sometimes foreign virtuosi visiting Poland insist on including contemporary music in their programme. The authorities are too wary to forbid it, but they never allow such music to be performed publicly. A special concert is arranged, with admission by special invitation only. It is usually held in one of the halls at the Ministry of Culture, and the audience is handpicked, consisting of people who know very well that it is only a gesture of polite propaganda.

Finally, I should like to write briefly about the Communist writers and artists from the West, who visit us so often in Poland. A fairly natural reaction makes them rather unpopular. Although in Poland it is generally accepted that artists and writers have to collaborate with the Government, even though it is Communist and totalitarian, the Communist artists from the free countries are regarded with the greatest suspicion. Their motives are not generally trusted. Also, of course, there is nothing more irritating than having a foreigner say how lucky you are to live under such a wonderful régime, especially since it is impossible to contradict them for fear of their denouncing you, perhaps involuntarily. I think, too, that it is not only in the Communist countries that Communism, on the whole, attracts the artistically second-rate and the untalented. Observing from this side of the Iron Curtain the advantages supposedly enjoyed by Communist writers and artists in the West—Stalin prizes, paid travel, translations, fees, honours—they think the transaction worth while. At least, that is how we have often interpreted the motives of some of our guests.

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Nicola Chiaromonte

Stage and Screen in Italy

I HAVE been a theatre lover since my adolescence, and a theatre critic in Rome for a year and a half now. I also became a movie fan and addict when I was a boy, and that early enthusiasm later led me to write movie criticism, when writing articles about the cinema (1930–1935) still implied something like an *avant-garde* gesture. And now I am even more of a theatre lover than I was at sixteen—that is, I am more convinced that there is no substitute for the direct communication of dramatic meanings provided by the stage. But the theatrical situation being what it is everywhere in the world today, and especially in Rome, I find that my love for the stage mainly consists in a longing for one that does not exist. What I like in the theatre is the form itself, which I enjoy almost as a matter of principle, even when the content is mediocre. On the other hand, my attitude to the movies is now just the reverse, since I have conceived a number of, what seem to me, insurmountable objections to the idea that the movies can be a genuine form of art. In fact, what I object to in the movies is precisely their form, the level of consciousness and sensibility to which they appeal. I am no longer a movie fan but I am still a movie addict, and I go to the cinema as everybody else does, to be entertained, to pass an evening, to kill time. If I object to the form of the movies, I must in all honesty confess that I enjoy their content. As a city-dweller and a mere unit in the crowd, I seem to need the kind of excitement provided by a well-constructed film. Which also means, of course, that I do not go to the movies instead of going to the theatre, but in addition to it, and in a very different psychological disposition.

The crisis of the theatre is universal. Even in Paris, the stage does not offer much that is new and really interesting these days. And in Italy there is simply not enough theatre to go round. The current explanation, which we all have heard again and again, is that the movies have taken the place of the theatre, that the movies—and not the theatre—is the "modern" medium of dramatic emotion, the one best adapted to the era of "mass-man." This may sound like a profound explanation, but it is, in fact, not an explanation at all. It simply begs the question, and it is contradicted by the fact that when a good play is presented it is usually successful, even in box-office terms.

The screen is not a substitute for the stage, for the simple reason that it does not provide the same kind of entertainment. Nor does the enjoyment of a good film preclude the appreciation of a good play. There are all kinds of reasons why the public should take its daily or weekly doses of entertainment in the form of movies; for one thing, it is the easiest and the cheapest. But the theatre does not need big crowds in order to exist and prosper. All it demands is that a certain percentage of moviegoers also have a taste for stage drama. The fact that in a given society the theatre does not succeed in attracting even this minimum, obviously has to do with the general level of taste and sensibility. In my opinion, at the root of the present crisis of the dramatic theatre there lies the fact that the contemporary

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city-dweller does not enjoy being told in public the truth about his moral situation.

In a deep sense, good drama and good farce are always moral ordeals, and imply a certain willingness on the part of the audience to undergo the test of how much truth it can stand; and, on the part of the playwright, a certain boldness in going as far as he can in submitting his contemporaries to such a test. It would almost seem as if we moderns were too oppressed by real life, too concerned that our problems be solved in practice, to enjoy having them tested in a purely moral sense on the stage. In Italy, to this peculiarly modern resistance to dramatic truth one has to add a long tradition of non-examination of the foundations of moral and social life; of accepting things as they are and as they happen; of trusting nature rather than consciousness to solve problems. The Italian view of things, and Italian Catholicism in particular, tends to appease rather than dramatise moral conflicts.

But the present situation of the Italian stage can also be analysed in more specific terms. The American critic, Eric Bentley, recently remarked that, in order to be truly alive, the theatre needs the organic connection of three elements: professional playwrights, professional theatre organisers devoted to the promotion of plays written and motivated by criteria that are not flatly commercial, and, finally, professional actors continuously practising their art. Now, Italy (as Bentley himself notices) is as rich in theatricality as she is poor in dramaturgy, and, I would add, only a little less poor in the practical field of theatre organisation.

This is not a new situation. There was little playwriting in Italy during the Renaissance and this depended on the patronage of a few wealthy *signori*. Only one play of this period is still alive, *La Mandragola* by Machiavelli, as the others were either purely literary, like Tasso's *Aminta*, or a curious mixture of rhetorical roughness and moral polemic, like Giordano Bruno's *Candelaio*.

There was some playwriting in Italy during the 18th and early 19th centuries, but very little of it survives today—a tragedy or two by Alfieri and a few charming comedies by Goldoni. (But Goldoni was not, properly speaking, an Italian writer: even when he wrote in Italian his plots, characters, and the way they expressed themselves belonged specifically to Venice, to Venetian *mores* and Venetian dialect.) Towards the end of the 19th century a group of really professional dramatists, influenced by French precedents, started to flourish in Italy; they were numerous and a genuine tradition began to form. Out of this movement came the plays of Verga and of D'Annunzio, followed by the masterpieces of Pirandello, in revolt against his predecessors.

As for theatre organisers, directors, and producers, the situation in Italy is simple. Until very recently, there were none. The jobs of organiser, producer, and director were traditionally united in a single person, the leading actor. Theatre companies were (and many of them still are) organised on the model of these 16th and 17th century companies of roving players which made Italian acting famous all over Europe. Only after the First World War, under the influence of European trends and the tireless prodding of such eminent critics as Silvio d'Amico, was the problem of having a few stable companies under the authority of a professional director seriously considered, and the principle that a good theatre company is one that has a specialised director at its head has finally been accepted. As a result of the efforts of d'Amico, a state dramatic school for the training of actors and directors, the Accademia Nazionale d'Arte Drammatica, is now functioning in Rome.

As far as acting goes, the situation is altogether different. Italians are naturally endowed with acting talent, and the tradition of acting is unbroken from the Middle Ages on —or, at any rate, from the period of the *commedia dell'arte*. After the famous Italian actors of the 16th and 17th centuries, there were great performers in the early 1800's who could stand comparison with the best abroad. Later, there were Tommaso Salvini, Ermete Zacconi, Ermete Novelli, and the greatest of all, Eleanora Duse. Ruggero Ruggeri, a famous interpreter of D'Annunzio and Pirandello, died last year at eighty. Last but not

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least, we have had a number of great regional, or dialect, performers, from the late Giovanni Grasso and Angelo Musco, both Sicilians, to the living Neapolitans, Eduardo, Peppino, and Titina De Filippo. These are the true heirs of the *commedia dell'arte*; or, to be more accurate, they belong to the ancient soil out of which the *commedia dell'arte* itself sprang.

REGIONAL, or "folk" acting poses a problem which is peculiar to Italy. It represents the oldest and the most continuous theatrical tradition of the country, and at the same time it is absolutely impossible to build a national theatre on it. Folk acting is a natural rather than a cultural phenomenon. The world of dialect theatre and dialect poetry has a characteristic which definitively distinguishes, separates, and protects it from the world of literature and the theatre at large; it is a world without a future, endowed with a time of its own, which is not the time of consciousness, but of nature and of vegetation—a kind of eternity. What is significant in nature is not the flow of time and the succession of events, but permanence. The permanence of the provincial world, however, is only apparent. It is in fact subject to the influence of the external world, while at the same time it resists it, admitting only the changes, meanings, and ideas that can, so to speak, be translated into Neapolitan, Roman, or Florentine; the rest remains foreign to it. Regional art is rarely empty; talent manifests itself in it with an immediacy and vigour that "cultivated" art often lacks, subject as it is to all kinds of complex requirements and even artifices. But regional art cannot progress; it can only be slowly altered, and finally absorbed, by the wider world of national culture.

Actors like the celebrated De Filippos are self-taught, and come up the hard way, usually from the boards of some third-rate music hall. It cannot be otherwise, because if there is something that cannot be taught it is the spontaneity and the comic vigour of the "folk actor." The De Filippos, as Angelo Musco before them, inevitably suggest to the sophisticated a parallel with Charlie Chaplin. Like Chaplin they are, indeed, great mimes. But, although their humour is essentially tragicomic, it never quite achieves the universal appeal of a Chaplin. It never quite belongs to "modern times," since its very nature demands that it stick to its native soil and to provincial life. In any case, it can never by itself produce a Molière. The plays of the De Filippos, as those of their predecessors, are fundamentally *canovacci*, rough sketches, which the actor fills with his own inventions and improvisations. The folk actor cannot be made subservient to a given text; he will rebel against it, and inevitably deform it. When the late Angelo Musco interpreted Pirandello, he was still Musco, but Pirandello was no longer Pirandello.

In other words, the folk actor can be a genius, but he remains a local genius, inescapably rooted in Catania, Naples, or Rome. In the wide and sophisticated world of national and international literature and acting, he is lost. In order to transplant this natural talent to the soil of national and cosmopolitan culture, you must not only carefully cultivate it, but also offer it an already prepared ground—that is, a theatrical tradition with a rich repertory, a solid and not simply commercial theatre organisation, and an already formed style of good acting. These three conditions, as we have seen, do not yet exist in Italy. We thus have the perfect circle of a theatricality which finds little employment on the cultured stage, and which, time and again, has been forced to go back from where it started—to the folk stage, the streets, the piazzas, the little cafés and the doorsteps of Italian towns and villages. If you go scouting around to catch Italian theatricality on its simplest level, in the handsome features, expressive gestures, and all-round spontaneity of Italian men and women, you will find plenty of it, especially among ordinary people. If your aim is the relatively simple one of photographing it, with a little directing ability you are likely to get excellent results. This is one of the reasons why, with so little good theatre, Italy has been able to produce so many good movies.

As a result of the persistent separation between provincial life and national culture, and the parallel persistence of many dialects, Italian society has not yet developed an

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organic tradition of dramatic theatre. The only theatre that has a truly national appeal, and a serious, continuous, even pampered tradition, is the opera. One might add that, such being the case, Italian popular taste has been influenced by opera acting, opera librettos, and opera staging to the point of being spoiled. In Italy the opera is the only theatre that enjoys the favour of the public. Folk theatre is next, with the dramatic theatre coming at the very end. This, however, does not mean that people don't like good drama and comedy; they simply have been given too little that is good until now, and their taste has remained uncertain as a result.

The material situation of the legitimate theatre in Italy can be summed up in the following figures: in Milan, the city with the largest number of theatres, a successful play can draw at most 15,000 theatre-goers in the course of an entire season; in the same season, an average musical comedy will draw 150,000 spectators. In order to help the Italian theatre to survive, the government gives subsidies to practically every company. Just to bring home the point I have made about the opera, I shall add that the government spends about four billion lire a year to support opera theatres and performances, as against four hundred million for the dramatic theatre.

What the Italian stage lacks most at present is a good average level. The best performances are far superior to those of twenty years ago. Under the direction of Giorgio Strehler and Paolo Grassi, the Piccolo Teatro di Milano has become one of the best groups in Europe; their production of *Arlecchino servo di due padroni* was a masterpiece of staging and acting, and a typically Italian one, at that. Orazio Costa, Luchino Visconti, Luigi Squarzina, and Vittorio Gassman, are excellent directors. As for actors, there are more than enough good ones, young and old, to provide good theatre. Unfortunately, in spite of the reaction against the 19th century custom of having a star who was surrounded by mediocrities, Italian companies still suffer from the uneven quality of acting. And the reason for this is the old one—the actors' individualism. No sooner do three or four good players find themselves together, than they separate to form their own companies.

However, the real Achilles' heel of the Italian theatre is the lack of new playwrights. This is partly due to the fact that writing scenarios for the movies is much more profitable than writing plays. But this is obviously only a secondary cause; no profit motive could keep a young writer with a real vocation for the stage from writing plays, especially since scriptwriting and playwriting are not necessarily contradictory. The real causes are social and cultural, not economic. In any case, during the last season, only three new Italian plays were produced. The most interesting was a theatre version of Moravia's satirical novel about dictatorship, *La Mascherata*, staged by the Piccolo Teatro di Milano and it had the typical defects of a novelist's first attempt to write for the stage. But having conceived the ambition to be a playwright, Moravia certainly does not lack the talent to succeed. The second new Italian play produced last year was a posthumous drama by Ugo Betti, *L'Aiuola Bruciata*; the third was a light comedy by Ada Bonacci, *L'Ora della Fantasia*, which has also had a long run in Paris under the title *l'Heure Eblouissante*.

ITALY is going through a period of rapid and sweeping changes; it is becoming a modern country. Modernisation seems, first of all, the advent of the people on the political as well as the cultural scene. So that, for example, the classical tradition inherited from the Renaissance which has inspired Italian culture until now is disintegrating or at least undergoing a deep change. Mass politics is shaking up the age-old inertia of the South. The separation between provincial life and national life is disappearing. It is a period of turmoil, hence of confusion and uncertainty. But it is also an era of remarkable vitality. Seeds are being sown in all directions, the fruits of which will only appear later on. That is why I think it is right for an observer to be severe and hopeful at the same time.

Unfavourable to the theatre, the present social and cultural situation is particularly favourable to the cinema. In order to prosper,

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the movies do not need ideas to be clarified, moral problems to be acutely felt, or popular taste and sensibility to be refined. All they need is a certain taste for the movement of life itself on the one hand, and a good amount of spontaneity on the other. This is where the innate theatricality of the Italian character comes in. And it is largely to this native gift that the Italian cinema owes its swift development and undeniable achievements. This inborn acting talent is accompanied by other natural gifts that can also be called "theatrical"—a quick perception of reality, for example, and a knack for the immediate rendering of it rather than for abstract ideas and refined psychological analysis. These are "photogenic" talents—talents, that is, that the movies can use and exploit immediately, while in order to bloom on the stage they need a certain amount of cultural "processing," so to speak. When all is said and done—and a great deal of very highbrow talk has gone on about the originality of Italian movies—what is the celebrated "neo-realistic" style but good reporting, sensitively and skilfully staged?

Take an outstanding film like De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves*, for example. The quality of this film is due, in the first place, to the collaboration between a director like De Sica, who is also an actor, with an expert scenario writer like Cesare Zavattini. The real trick, however, is one of improvisation, and it comes right out of the *commedia dell'arte* tradition. To start with, finding the two main characters, the young worker and little boy, was an essential part of the achievement. And the point was not to teach the workingman and the boy to act, but to exploit their naturalness without spoiling it. After all, as far as the actors are concerned, the talent of a movie director always consists in obtaining from them the appearance of spontaneity, and catching it on the fly with the camera. Having to deal with ordinary people, chosen because their physical appearance and photogenic qualities best corresponded to the effect he wanted to obtain on the screen, De Sica had to persuade them *not* to act, but simply to imitate themselves. They had to be helped to repeat, in front of the camera, the expressions and gestures they would have used in real life under the particular circumstances suggested by the plot.

A "neo-realistic" scenario writer has to have, above all, an eye and an ear for the "topical," for what can happen to everybody and is within the range of everybody's daily experience. In other words, he has to be a good journalist. The novelty and freshness of "neo-realistic" movies came mainly from the fact that in Italy the life of the common people had never been filmed, and that Ancient Roman, heroic, utterly conventional themes had been imposed on the movies by Fascist rhetoric. Even before Fascism, Italian movie directors had acted on the assumption that only the melodramatic, the exotic, and the basely sentimental were photogenic. The "neo-realists" decided to film the obvious, and on the screen the obvious did indeed appear new. The original impulse came from American movies, of course: what the Italians added was a deliberate effort to give the illusion of real life, even at the cost of appearing clumsy and naïve. In fact, a certain lack of technical skill and sophistication is an integral part of the charm of the best "neo-realistic" movies, like *Two Pennyworth of Hope* by Enrico Castellani. To be shocking and clumsy, rather than false and slick, has been the æsthetic rule of "neo-realism."

As long as the Italian movies were a kind of free-lancing affair, individual talent and the gift for improvisation could exercise themselves quite freely. But, although the movies may occasionally attain the quality of art, they are inescapably a business and an industry. The Italian movies have now become a big business. This is, in itself, a threat to the very impulse out of which "neo-realism" was born. It brings in its wake standardisation, commercialism, and also conformism. That Hollywood blight, the cult of the star, which the "neo-realists" made such a point of avoiding, is now in full swing in Italy. More and more movies are made on the basis of purely commercial criteria, and this creates an atmosphere in which even the most principled director ends up by making concessions to the businessman. The most successful movie of last year, *Bread, Love and*

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Dreams, entertaining and lively as it may be, is nothing more than a successful popular movie —in fact it is the most successful movie ever made in Italy. Traces of the "neo-realistic" approach are still visible in it. But what was once fresh and improvised has become a cliché.

This evolution was unavoidable. The fault lies not so much in commercialism as in the very idea that the movies are an independent artistic medium, nearer to "reality" than any other, so that, if you stick close to "reality" you can go on making good movies indefinitely. It is not true that "reality" contains within itself an indefinite quantity of artistic themes. Real life only contains what is in the minds of people who observe it. The movies do not feed on themselves, but on the cultural atmosphere out of which they are born. Otherwise they end up in patterns and clichés. And once we come to patterns and clichés, it is perfectly natural that the movie organiser should give preference to the clichés that pay over those that don't. Immediacy, spontaneity, the capacity to improvise are qualities that are essential to any true cultural activity. But taken as ends in themselves, they dry up very quickly.

Art feeds on art, form on form. This would seem to imply, among other things, that far from being able to fare well on the crisis of the dramatic theatre, and even farther from being able to supplant it, a means of mass entertainment like the movies finally needs the dramatic theatre in order to subsist, just as it needs all the other forms of cultural refinement.

Goldfish at an Angle

Fish in the bowl have no depth at all
to my eye at this angle.

And even head-on
curiously they flatten

themselves against glass against eyes against
—the world. Fenced

round they are, yet not
round but flat

they are
there.

Alan Riddell

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Stephen Spender

Inside the Cage

Notes on the Poetic Imagination Today

IDEALLY, the artist should transform the environment into his own world. But since we live in bodies, which are dressed in clothes, which inhabit buildings, which are parts of cities, which are placed in countries, the most we can expect to see art realise in our surroundings is a struggle between utility and an enhancing uselessness.

The reason why "poets adore ruins" and why—to almost everyone—ruin can make a hideous modern building seem beautiful, may be that destruction celebrates the triumph of the useless over the useful. The useful (in a building, for example) belongs to the living—to the inhabitant—but the useless is that aspect of architecture which is like a mirror where the eyes of the dead have seen their delight reflected. A city should belong at the same time to the inhabitants, who *use* it, the dead who still exist in forms which give pleasure to the eye, and the unborn in whom the dead will live. In towns where the dead and the unborn are omitted, there are simply buildings and thoroughfares used by contemporaries. Utility seems inhuman even to the users, perhaps as the result of a human defect which makes us ungrateful—incognisant almost—of that which we use. The inhabitants of modern industrial cities have a look of complete expressionlessness, of disregard for their surroundings, when they walk through streets or go on buses and trains. This is the "utility" look (just like "utility" clothes or furniture), the look of those who know that they are in a particular place simply for a particular purpose, and not in a sacred relation with its past and future.

Architecture, and most other "applied" arts, express the tension of the æsthetic against the useful. At the other extreme, music is a completely unutilitarian art, which starts off at the point where the victory of the spirit over musical instruments is complete, and there is an endless reign of imagined peace. But art made with words is inevitably debatable ground. Language enters our ears and eyes like a river flowing out of our surroundings; yet those who have a command of words can shape them into patterns that, while remaining contemporary, resist the mere flow of things. Every poem, however "pure," because it resists surrounding life, could be, and in totalitarian societies often is, suspected of being a manifesto. In poems, the contemporary meets pasts and futures within one individual mind.

The Romantic Polarities

PERHAPS we can build a statue on the skyline which, pointing to the clouds with a magnificent gesture, draws in our grimy slums through its feet, and, on a finger, uplifts them to the clouds, where they change into light; or perhaps we can only achieve our own transformation, inside ourselves, but with the possibility of communicating the secret to a happy few.

These two poles of outward and inward transformation are the Romantic extremes:

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Shelley's claim that the poets are unacknowledged legislators, Keat's cry, "oh for a life of pure sensation." Keats saw that Shelley's wish to vivify the language of noble reason, so that it would persuade men to make a just world, could lead only to the surrender of private poetic gardens to public political planners; Keats wrote poems like arbours, in which readers were invited to spend a life-time eating imaginary nectarines from imaginary dishes.

Although Keats attacked Shelley, their positions had this in common: both sought a centre of their own poetic creating where the imagination is unconditioned. In making his wild claim about poetic legislators, Shelley is really anticipating Thomas Mann's remark in the early 1930's, "Karl Marx must read Friedrich Hölderlin." Shelley realised that unless poetry could be at the centre of politics it might be reduced to illustrating a politician's thesis. Keats chose the alternative to changing society through poetry: that of separating poetry from public matters altogether. Keats offered an entrancing void filled with imaginings, where Shelley offered a transformed everything; but the difference between them was one of strategy. Keats thought that poetry should go into the world as a rich beggar, Shelley as a paupered, democratised king.

Progress and Tradition

UNTIL the late 18th century, the idea of transformation had a central place in life. The art which transformed buildings, ceremonies, tragic or comic experience, drew inspiration from the belief that all humanity was involved in a struggle to attain divine or ideal forms. Although there are vast differences between religions, so long as there is the idea of transformation through the spirit, the signs which divide nations and creeds in history can reunite them again in art, in symbols of rebirth, metamorphosis. Given this acceptance of the idea of transformation, the famous "suspension of disbelief," which enables a reader to enter into the spirit of a belief not his own, is not difficult.

With the Industrial Revolution, the idea of Progress challenged, and undermined, the belief in transformation of outer appearances through inner life. But Progress offered the possibility of another kind of change: that of decreasing pain and increasing happiness. We have grown used to Progress being sneered at by the poets and critics: but whenever I read such a taunt, by Baudelaire for instance, I cannot help reflecting that Progress stands for curing the disease which rendered his life miserable. And if one says that this disease perhaps was the stimulus to his genius, then one is still confronted by further choices between those things which transform, and those which improve, the environment.

The idea of Progress makes everything unnecessary a battleground between use and beauty. It is inevitably attached to the greatest happiness of the greatest number—to battalions of the underfed who will become the well-fed. It would certainly be un-Progressive to build a Venice if, with the same expenditure of energy, you could build twelve dormitory green-belt suburbs.

Yet Progress alienates men from the idea that they should shape their environment into a significance beyond the uses of bodily living. Until the basic needs of everyone have been met, transformation seems fanciful, selfish, wasteful, unnecessary. At best, people who have such aims are told that the most useful city would also be the most beautiful, and that art is perfection of function. This is to say, it is based upon the same kind of external calculations and statistics as those which are made for welfare. Functionalism is the philistinism of people who talk about a work of art as a "well-done-job" like any other piece of plumbing.

There have been various attempts to create a cold, external and abstract art which treats the eye as an organ needing measured quantities of light, colour, space, curved and straight lines, as the lungs need air. But on the whole, the artists, and especially the poets, have rejected the Progressive idea. They have looked with malicious pleasure on its failures (wars, revolutions, etc.) and have concentrated on trying to express the tragedy which has overtaken their inherited past, in the apocalyptic imagery of modern catastrophe.

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The Conditioned and the Conditionless

THE view that the artist not only interpreted the religious and worldly symbols of Church and state, but in doing so put his imagination at the centre of them—added something uniquely his own to them—was superseded. At the beginning of the 19th century the poet finds himself imprisoned inside his own sensibility as in a cage. He tries —like Keats—to make the cage "a rosy sanctuary"; or—like Shelley—the centre of a revolution of the world through poetry married to political philosophy.

What has happened is that the idea of something purely creative, conditionless as God or as life itself, which is the shaping force at the centre of the individual imagination, has disappeared. Instead, the centre of the modern consciousness is utilitarian.

It is as a result of this change that "strategy" has become the key word in modern literary criticism. Can past values—immensely enhancing the significance of life and yet ruthless in their uselessness—come to terms with 19th century utilitarianism, reaffirmed in the 20th century by the modern crusade for social justice, ruthless in its disregard for the past and individual values?

We see the attempts of the poets, in the cage, to find—even within the cage—an unconditioned centre. Matthew Arnold's idea that poetry could become a substitute for religion is really a variant of Shelley's attempt to put poetry at the centre of legislation. The wings which are "no longer wings to fly /But merely vans to beat the air /The air which is now thoroughly small and dry" are also—one may suggest—the wings of the ineffectual angel who was Shelley.

Finally, today we are faced with the consequences of the surrender of the "unconditioned poetic imagination," which had been asserted by the Romantics and had been inherited by them from a society which in its religious and social institutions enjoyed a *lingua franca* of lived poetic symbolism. After the collapse of the attempts to put poetry back into the symbolism of creeds or politics, and even to make it an alternative religion or way of life, we now find poets accepting the idea that the imagination has no autonomy, is completely conditioned by circumstances. Writing and criticism have become closed systems, and it is considered bad taste to relate the work that is written back to the view of life from which the writer's attitude derives. Yet unless the questions and answers on which the present attitude is based are reopened, poetry will not find a way out of its cage.

Inside the Cage of Neutralised Nature

THE unconditioned centre is where the imagination sings orphic songs from the centre of existence, which can change the appearance of things for those who hear them. The possibility of such a "penetralium of mystery" by poetry is reaffirmed by the institutions of belief. But since institutions, rituals, ceremonies, dogma which confirm inward life are themselves outward forms, the idea of changing sensibility for ever recreating life through song is the heart of the mystery.

The conditioned centre is imagination banished into a solitude of its own. It reacts and adjusts to a material world whose reasons are based on calculations according to needs, policy, dangers, and the like. These walls have no ears for the music of Orpheus. Belief has been undermined, so that its institutions seem empty shells from which the spirit has fled.

It is this situation of belief confronted by unbelief which I. A. Richards pressed to the logical conclusions of unbelieving in his famous essay *Science and Poetry*, first published in 1926. As criticism, this essay misfires in its attacks on D. H. Lawrence and W. B. Yeats for escapism, its praise of *The Waste Land* for "effecting a complete severance between his poetry and *all* beliefs." However, its still great interest lies in its anticipation of a world where the life of the imagination is completely divorced from the material of fact.

The modern poet—as Richards sees him—inhabits a world of neutralised Nature. All statements of a factual kind belong to the province of science and have nothing to do with poetry. The Magical View of "belief in a world of Spirits and Powers which control events, and which can be evoked and, to some extent, controlled themselves by human

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powers," has disappeared, together with "belief in inspiration and the beliefs underlying Ritual."

So the poet must accept this picture of a universe totally indifferent to man and his fate, and he must cut himself off from all beliefs. He must refuse to hunger even after a basis of belief. However, if he effects this severance from belief and realises that poetry has no connection with verifiable truths, then myths and "all the attitudes to other human beings and to the world in all its aspects, which have been serviceable to humanity, remain as they were, as valuable as ever. . . . The justification, or the reverse, of any attitude lies, not in the object, but in itself, in its serviceableness to the whole personality."

So imagination is reconciled to the world of materialism and utility, by being proved to be useful.

The severance from belief means breaking the connection of statements of the inner life of the imagination with any kind of corresponding outward reality. That in the past there has been such a connection of intuitions with ultimately verifiable existent facts has been a claim of poetry. And that which authenticated the truth of poetic statement (corresponding to proof in science) was belief. Thus if belief is banished there can be no question of there being true poetic statements —unless they also happen to be scientific ones. All we are left with is projections of the effects of experience on the poet's personality into a language of symbols and myths. To use psychological terms: poems are projected complexes.

Richards calls an unverifiable statement divorced from beliefs a "pseudo-statement," which "is justified entirely by its effect in releasing and organising our impulses and attitudes (due regard being had for the better or worse organisations of these *inter se*)."

Now there is no question but that scientific statements differ from poetic ones. Moreover, a great many poetic ones are conscious make-believe of the kind that Richards labels "pseudo-statements" (or of the kind that all statements in poetry would become if poets accepted this classification). Yet there are certainly statements of quite a different order in Dante, in Shakespeare, in Wordsworth and Blake—to name a few—which are not scientific and which yet the poet believed to be true and, indeed, ultimately verifiable, though not by scientific methods. Now if we turn these statements into "pseudo-statements," the fact that the poet himself believed in them, turns them into psychologically useful self-delusions. Putting this in another way, it means that the poet instead of having been, as he thought, at the centre of his world, with glimpses of a reality beyond, becomes sensibility acted upon and reacting, more or less valuably, to his environment.

The Romantics, on the verge of the materialist 19th century, were aware of the crisis of belief. Hence Coleridge's preoccupation with the "willing suspension of disbelief," Keats's idea of "negative capability," Shelley's atheism, Blake's illuminist mysticism. But doubt for the Romantics was a strategic device for recovering faith by putting their own poetry at the centre of life. Side by side with their negations go their affirmations—Shelley on the poet as legislator, Keats identifying beauty with truth, Coleridge: "An undevout poet is mad; in the strict sense of the word, an undevout poet is an impossibility . . ." and "It has pleased Providence, that the divine truths of religion should have been revealed to us in the form of poetry."

When the poet abandons the belief which connects visible with invisible worlds, he is left with nothing but a problem of adjustment through poetry to the situation of man in the surroundings of alien nature. He is in a cage with bars that are mirrors reflecting only himself, and there is no possibility of entering through the imagination into the factual realities outside.

I. A. Richards draws comfort in this situation by pointing out that the spectator does not have to believe anything in order to enter into the mood of Tragedy. Specifically, he cites *King Lear* as an example of unbelieving Tragedy. "We need no beliefs, and indeed we must have none, if we are to read *King Lear*." True, we do not have to believe in the gods Lear invokes in the storm to understand the play, but I cannot see that a refusal to

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believe in the sacredness of the office of king, would do anything but hinder our understanding. It is not that we have positively to believe in any dogma to understand the intersection of visible with invisible worlds in *Lear*, but that we have to approach the play with a mind receptive to mysteries. To take another example, I think one can demonstrate that a refusal or complete incapacity to believe that the ghost of Hamlet's father is anything more than an expression of Hamlet's psychology—an image thrown by his neurosis on to a wall—would rob the Tragedy of a dimension, and convert the King and Queen into the gaolers of a lunatic.

Hamlet, in the middle of the ferocious scene with his mother after the play within the play, suddenly is visited by his father's ghost. The Queen asks him: "Whereon do you look?" and pointing to the ghost, Hamlet replies: "On him, on him: look you how pale he glares." After which, the Queen expostulates:

> "This is the very coynage of your Brain,
> This bodilesse Creation extasie is very
> cunning in."

How would we feel if the Queen said something to the effect of: "O Hamlet, thou hast coyned a pseudo-statement!" The point here is that we do not have to believe in the world inhabited by the ghost, but we do have to believe in the possibility of such a world. Suspension of disbelief is, in fact, believing, whereas refusal to believe is the substitution of a rational explanation for the irrational. It puts us inside the cage.

And in this essay Richards has stated excellently the situation of the poet inside the cage. We do not have to agree with his conclusions (I doubt whether he now agrees with them himself) to see that he has thrown a harsh, clear light on the effects of those doubts already searingly felt. He says "accept the cage and sing inside it of your complex attitudes, the value of experience in itself." But the answer of the poets has, in fact, been to seek more desperately than ever, ways out. That is the real significance of Lawrence's dark gods and life forces, Yeats's spirit séances, and the more recent returns to what Sir Herbert Read calls "a medieval thearchy." Insistence on belief may seem desperate, but insistent unbelief makes subject become object, the active the acted upon, and sensibility report a prison.

The Literary Myth of Life Outside

THE contemporary poet inhabits a world which is very like I. A. Richards' world of statements and pseudo-statements. On the one hand there are a great many people who think that reality consists of statements certified by scientists; on the other, there are the poets "clinging to their crosses" or "hungering after a basis of beliefs." Cyril Connolly, in a review of Yeats's *Collected Letters*, has recently put this well:

> Most people do not believe in anything very much and our greatest poetry is given us by those who do. The well-meaning, moderate, reasonable, sceptical, cultured humanist is the audience, the fanatic is the conjuror. Critics who do not believe must comment on creators who do. . . .

In the past, poets were often lackeys, but all the same their poems, when they were sent out into the world, were like magnets with fields of power. You wrote "king" or "cross" in your poetry, and there were real kings and real crosses in people's lives, so without having to have the sacred nature of these symbols impressed on them, people responded.

Today it is still possible to play on a few worn emotions: one can send out a love-signal, so long as it is accompanied by a purgative to free it of associations with the movies. More detached symbols have to be loaded with references, in order to establish their significance, which still has some prestige value.

All this may or may not be true. But that is how it looks, from inside the cage. As they distrust all statistics, all tests, all questionnaires, because they smell of scientific inquiry, those inside really have no means of discovering whether or not their assumptions are just. Nevertheless, inside the cage very definite assumptions are made about the life outside, and upon this myth the greater part of literary activity is based.

Here are a few of these assumptions: modern men are less "living" than people were in the past, tradition has died out of life and become

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a secret cult practised in literature, especially by (Cambridge Eng. and Mass.) critics, there is a widespread collapse of values, moral and æsthetic; no one outside the cage believes anything any longer. Adding all this up, those inside the cage discover that there is an unexplained inconsistency in the fact that they go on writing—an activity which they have proved to be almost impossible. Several of the older poets inside the cage have only produced their major work on condition that it is understood by everyone else that it is the last great work possible in the modern predicament. There is general agreement that if the work that goes on inside the cage has any failings, these are entirely attributable to what goes on outside. Inside the cage, perhaps the best we can hope for now is a few hard, crystalline images unconnected with anything that goes on outside. As Sir Herbert Read put it recently (ENCOUNTER, January 1955):

> We have the poetry we deserve, just as we have the painting we deserve, the music we deserve; and if it is fragmented, personal, spasmodic, we have only to look around us to see the satanic chaos through which nevertheless a few voices have penetrated. The voices are pitched high and may sound discordant; but sometimes they convey an image that has a crystalline brightness and hardness, and cannot be shrouded.

From inside the cage, it has nevertheless been necessary to write for those who are outside. Since there is (supposedly) no basis of belief to work on—this having been dispelled by "proper" statements—what spiritual realities outside the cage can the poet appeal to? The answer is—negative ones. You can show people that they are bored, that what they have in this civilisation is not life but a kind of death-in-life. Baudelaire says: reader, you are bored. Lawrence: you have denied and frustrated your instinctive life. Eliot: you are dead.

This negative view of modern life is complemented by a very positive conception of the past. Here there is the greatest unanimity among writers who disagree in most other respects. Despite the tremendous reaction against the writing of the end of the last century, actually the idea found in Walter Pater and in *The Yellow Book* that pagan times were much more vivid than our own is carried on by D. H. Lawrence until 1930, and, still more recently, by Henry Miller. Although veiled by irony, a nostalgia for a pagan and an early Christian past, and for primitive societies, is strong in *The Waste Land* and *Sweeney Agonistes*—even in the *Four Quartets*.

Nearly all the poets agree that their contemporaries of the industrial age are corpses and phantoms, while men and women in the past were more living. At the same time, in D. H. Lawrence and Henry Miller, there is an idea of saving the present through a resurrection of the past in the physical, sexual body. These writers oscillate between violent assertions of the physical body and instincts now, and the idea that the "living" inhabit irrecoverable pasts or primitive societies.

Thus, Henry Miller in *The Colossus of Maroussi*:

> I say the whole world, fanning out in every direction from this spot, was once alive in a way that no man has ever dreamed of. I say there were gods who roamed everywhere, men like us in form and substance, but free, electrically free.

D. H. Lawrence in the introduction to his paintings:

> We, dear reader, you and I, we were born corpses and we are corpses.

But when Lawrence looks back to a Grecian past (in Sicily) corresponding to that which Henry Miller felt at Mycenae:

> So now they come back! Hark!
>
> Hark! The low and shattering laughter of bearded men with the slim waists of warriors and the long feet of moonlit dancers.

Contrast this, though, with the idea of the transcendence of such a past in a resurrection through sex, of Lady Chatterley:

> The life of the body, he [Sir Clifford] said, is just the life of the animals.
>
> And that's better than the life of professorial corpses. But it's not true! The human body is only just coming to real life. With the Greeks it gave a lovely flicker, then Plato and Aristotle killed it, and Jesus finished it off. But now the body is coming really to life, it is really rising from the tomb. And it will be a lovely, lovely life in the lovely universe, the life of the human body.

Certainly, Lawrence at times gets out of the

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cage. For the way to get out is to get back to some universal, positive and loving principle which unites imagination and nature instead of splitting them in two. It is this unifying force of passion which is symbolised by sex in Lawrence.

Credit Based on Bankruptcy

All the same, the idea of negation predominates. And for some time the most impressive affirmations can be constructed within the heart of negation. To declare bankruptcy is better than to live upon empty conventions. Castles of the imagination can be built more firmly on air than on false foundations. Everything—as Yeats well knew—can become its opposite. Thus in an age of reduced values, to assert that there are no values is an affirmation of values. The void with which a civilisation ends can be filled with a vision which is a sum of all the phases of that civilisation.

But declarations of bankruptcy are extremely dangerous, because their credit rests on the losses themselves. One cannot write this civilisation's last great poem more than once. After that, one can only justify it by lesser and inferior works. As Wyndham Lewis noted recently:

> We seem to be running down, everywhere in life, to a final end to all good things. Compared to fifty years ago, when the supreme and ultimate rot began, our food—our milk, our cheese, our bread, our concocted foods, everything, in short, is inferior, and there is every reason to suppose it will get more so, decade by decade.

In this situation, it is surely understandable that poets should want to take refuge from the great Negation by discovering that certain positive religious and moral institutions still exist. Thus in many directions we see—often side by side with despairing and destructive ideas—the attempt to find within society, or within the churches or within the academies and universities, some tradition where a *lingua franca* of symbols, dogma, style and learning survives.

After all, in spite of everything, the churches have carried on even while we were being told that the "magical view" of belief in a world of Spirits and Powers had been superseded. Moreover, this view has the advantage that—superseded or not—it is not really open to the arguments by which it has been talked out of existence.

One cannot argue about the return to theology in literature. If one believes, it will make sense, if one does not one will talk, like Herbert Read, about "the attempt to revive a mediaeval thearchy." But there can be no genuine discussion between belief and unbelief. What one may note, however, is that in the works of the writers who have gone back to older dogmas, there seems a weakening of their hold on the idiom of contemporary life, corresponding to the increase of their power to express their beliefs. Mr. Eliot and Mr. Auden might well retort that if they seem less concerned with contemporary life, this is because they have enlarged their understanding of a life outside time altogether. Nevertheless, these efforts do not resolve the problem of putting poetry back at the centre of the unconditioned imagination; and the reason is that, although the weakening in daily life of the symbolism of the church is no argument against religious belief, it has deprived religious poetry of its common language. Compared with their early, secular poems, the later Eliot and Auden seem curiously specialised in an age of specialisation.

In his introduction to the fifth volume of the Auden–Pearson anthology, *Poets of the English Language*, Auden anticipates this objection with an objection of his own against the position of the poet without religious dogma living on the moral capital of Christianity. He adroitly puts the boot on the other foot:

> They were all of them uneasily aware of the possibility that the liberal creed might only hold for talented and successful people like themselves, for men who might speculate upon the meaning of existence in general but never had to put the personal question "Why do I exist?" because they were enjoying themselves in the exercise of their talents and the glory such exercise brought them. However many adoring disciples might sit at their feet, outside the cosy circle there was a shadow who was by no means friendly, to whom their genius for inspiring speech was a joke, and who spoke himself in a very different vein.

The shadow—Auden suggests—is the hero of

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Dostoievsky's *Notes from the Underground*, who refuses to consult a doctor—although not doing so will prove fatal to him—out of spite.

The argument—just, in its criticism of the Liberals—suggests a simple alternative in which writers accept spiritual discipline common to all. From Auden's own Anglicanism, one can guess what this alternative would be. Yet if it is true that "they were all haunted men, with a room in the house which was kept locked and from which they had to distract the attention of visitors . . . . The snark, that is, the meaning of existence," it is also true that wandering around the cellar and not locked up there was the ghost of unbelief, of a resignation to the ultimate meaninglessness of existence. And the ghost in the attic and the one in the cellar had no common language in which they could come to terms—or, indeed, even quarrel. Some inside the cage have decided now in favour of the ghost in the attic—who after all has eternity to offer—but it does not make any difference to the fact that the fissure in our society which puts some on the side of the attic and others on the side of the cellar, keeps the poet inside the cage.

Apologia for an Interest in Life

THE problem is to put the creative imagination back at the centre of life. This cannot be done by the orthodox religious without their achieving something even more difficult than a mass conversion of 20th century man—that is, forcing the "world picture" of science into the frame of theology. On the other hand, acceptance of the division of the world into the truth of science and the pseudo-statements of the imagination is to lock poetry inside the cage.

The following propositions should be considered:

(1) Art has a purpose which is to transform contemporary life.

(2) It may well be necessary for a poet, in order that he have a working structure for the symbolism of his poetry, to have a rigid, systematic framework of dogma. That, though, is outside the poetry. Within the poetry, the belief, resting on this framework which gives it force and precision, is nevertheless undogmatic and universal. Eliot, who is dogmatic in his orthodoxy when he writes prose, could—if one read his poems alone—easily be thought to be a Buddhist. The very esoteric ideas of Yeats, which are completely baffling—and quite incredible—if one reads *A Vision*—offer no obstruction to an understanding of his poetry. Poets who are completely opposed in their intellectual ideas, can nevertheless—if one read only what they had imagined—be reconciled in their poetry. The really important distinction today is not between different creeds but between believing and not believing. Beliefs put man at the centre of his poetry; materialism makes him an illustrator of a system outside the poetry.

(3) The assumptions of critics and poets about modern life should be challenged at every point and treated not as statements but as open questions.

(4) It is time that instead of saying "We get the art our society deserves" someone said "We get the society our art deserves."

(5) "The task of genius, and man is nothing if not genius, is to keep the miracle alive, to live always in the miracle, to make the miracle more and more miraculous, to swear allegiance to nothing, but live miraculously, think only miraculously, die miraculously." Henry Miller, *The Colossus of Maroussi*.

(6) We live today in a world with two futures—of total annihilation, or of revolution different from any envisaged by politics. It is impossible to think of survival only in terms of material progress. In regard to the future, we are now like Pascal taking his bet on eternity. We take our bet on survival of the physical world, but it can only be through living and working—in Henry Miller's sense—miraculously.

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Kay Cicellis

Funeral Games

"COME ON, hurry," Joseph called to his friend, stamping his foot.

The pale ugly boy on the doorstep lowered his eyes, meekly; but his obedience went no further. He could not hurry. He hobbled down the steps carefully, like a girl.

"Come on," said Joseph, reproachfully this time. "What, are you tired already?"

"No," said the other boy, Fonda. His voice sounded as if he'd been asked something that didn't concern him.

Joseph watched him, his mouth pursed. He picked his nose absent-mindedly—he might have been looking at a picture in a book. Suddenly he shook it all off—hitched up his shorts and cantered away, digging his toes in the dust. "Quick, quick," he tooted at the top of his voice, with the urgency of a railway-engine; and his voice banged like tin against the wintry, moss-covered walls of the empty school-yard. "Quick," he cried, "recess will be over any minute." He enjoyed frightening Fonda, and himself, with this threat.

Fonda plodded round the courtyard behind him with the same meek and steady steps.

Imitating the screech of brakes, Joseph halted before him. He began pounding at Fonda with his clenched fists, quickly, lightly. Round and round his friend he danced, punching delicately into the thick, well-patched coat which sent his fists bouncing back to him like rubber. Fonda wiped his cold nose, whined a little, rather uncertain, and stooped to pick up a button that had fallen off his coat.

"So you won't fight, ha," panted Joseph, working himself up with enormous zeal. Fonda examined his button mournfully; he threw a slow, dull, circular glance round the courtyard, as if expecting the whole place to be littered with lost buttons.

Joseph gave him a final punch in the chest; a hard, angry one. Then he stopped dancing.

"Why doesn't your mother take you to the doctor?" he cried, exasperated.

"She did," said Fonda, and he went and sat on a stone—like a girl again, gathering an invisible skirt round his blue knees; he blew on his button and polished it.

"Well? Are you really as ill as all that?"

"Yes."

"Why? Why?"

"I have pernicious anæmia, and the consequences may be fatal if proper care is not taken of me immediately," recited Fonda.

There was no pride in his voice. This horrified Joseph; this was the worst disease, the most unnatural; no one had ever caught it before; it did not belong to the kind that made boys pale as archangels, that put a supreme contempt on their thin faces and a light of fever in their eyes like the light of battle.

"Well? And will . . . will proper care be taken of you?" he asked under his breath.

"My mother said to the doctor: I have no money—how can I take proper care of him?" He had an uncanny memory. He always got better marks than Joseph. He simply learnt everything by heart, then sat very still, unravelling his memory.

"And what is it the doctor said would happen if you're not looked after?"

"The consequences may be fatal if . . ."

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started Fonda all over again. Joseph interrupted him with a great cry:

"So you may not be here for the football match next month!" He nearly sobbed with fury. "You promised! You promised we'd go together!"

The school-bell began ringing, an old record on an old gramophone.

Joseph took Fonda by the arm and walked back with him to class, matching his slow, meek steps.

What about the football match? What would happen if Fonda was taken away? I'll go with Loizides instead, he thought impatiently. Or with Couloumis. But it was no good; he wanted to go with Fonda; only with Fonda. Nothing else would do. It was the same with buying hot chestnuts on the way home; going to the shadow-theatre; stealing empty lemonade bottles; drinking forbidden things, vinegar or eau-de-cologne; painting one's fingernails with ink, one blue, one red; burying things, or wrapping them up in paper, or killing them, or crowning them. Always, Fonda had to be there. At one time he had even forced Fonda —not very successfully—to sneeze every time that he sneezed.

THE school-teacher was annoyed with Joseph and Fonda for having sneaked away from the gymnasium at recess. "During classes, you exercise your minds; during recess, you must exercise your bodies; *νοῦς ὑγειής ἐν σώματι ὑγειῇ*, as our great ancestors used to say. That must be your constant ideal. Never grow lax; use up every moment to make yourselves worthy of your past. *Γρηγορεῖτε, γρηγορεῖτε*, as our Lord Jesus Christ used to say." He taught them both Ancient Greek and Religious History, and, like most Greeks, found no difficulty in reconciling the two worlds, pagan and Christian. Only his Athenian politicians were sometimes a shade too virtuous, while his saints leapt across the lakes of Palestine like tall, loud-voiced heroes.

Joseph leapt to his feet, wakeful and brave as Christ or Miltiades might have wished him.

"Sir, my friend Fonda is sick," he said determinedly.

"Sick! I have heard that before. We must learn to control that rebellious foe, our flesh. Must I remind you of the great Zeno, who . . ." But he was a realist at heart, so with a sudden change of tone:

"What's the matter with him?" he asked.

"He is very sick indeed," said Joseph; he could not remember what the doctor had said; he snapped his fingers impatiently at Fonda, sitting next to him, just as he did during lessons when he wanted some prompting for a difficult name or a forgotten date. But Fonda paid no notice; his memory was of no use when the information required was out of context.

"Where is the boy?" asked the teacher. "Let me see him." Fonda shuffled slowly to his feet and hung his head.

"He looks very much the same to me as every day." The class tittered. "If he is really sick, let his mother send me a letter saying so." The class laughed openly. Some of the boys who sat next to Fonda stooped over and stroked his head roughly, whispering in mock-tenderness: "Poor mite! Unfortunate child!" And one of them said: "*We'll* look after you!" The teacher frowned, tapped his pencil on the desk; from the back row there came one last heart-rending cry: "Come to mother!" then the class subsided into silence.

At the next recess, the class kept their promise. They looked after Fonda, ferociously. After a brief and violent quarrel as to who would be chief surgeon, they laid him out on the wooden jumping-horse, and began "operating" on him.

First they decided to amputate one leg, then found they had made a mistake, and tackled the other leg; but that was also wrong, so they concentrated on the arms. Finally, they resolved to get to the heart of the matter, and stripped his trousers and jacket open. The exposed belly-flesh was instantly hidden by the eager, iron fingers that swooped down on it. Fonda was too frightened to speak. Enraged, Joseph pounced on the stooped, absorbed backs; but they were as compact as a wall. He kicked their shins, but they felt nothing. He pulled at their shirt-tails, but their bodies merely fell forward again, back to Fonda, indifferent as dummies. Behind this strange and absolute passivity of their backs, behind this façade, it was horrifying

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to imagine the hidden, frenzied activity going on inside.

"Sew him up, sew him up!" sang the chief surgeon. "It's no use, there's a spider in his belly. We must try something else."

So they lifted him up and carried him over to the dumb-bells; there he was hooked on, while two boys hung on heavily to his feet, to make him grow into a tall and handsome youth, such as Alcibiades.

NEXT day Fonda was absent from school. When the teacher threw out his name questioningly at roll-call, Joseph leapt to his feet with the same determination as the day before, and said importantly: "Absent owing to sickness, sir. I have a letter from his mother." His announcement must have made some impression on the class, because the teacher had to repeat several of the following names twice before he got a reply. Joseph was about the only one who answered immediately, and his "Present" was said in a quiet, authoritative way. During the rest of the lesson, he spent his time staring thoughtfully at the boys' faces, one by one, as if gauging them. He paid no attention to what the teacher said, and when examined, admitted his ignorance at once, without any of his usual noisy attempts at camouflage. Loizides tried replacing Fonda as his prompter, but the offer was rejected. Joseph remained erect and unhearing, well above these small necessities.

At the first recess, a group formed around Joseph in the gymnasium—but in a gradual, inconspicuous way. Several boys drifted towards him and lingered around with a bored look on their faces. At last, one of them asked: "Well, what's happened to the unfortunate child?" Joseph did not answer; he caught hold of the dumb-bells on which Fonda had been hung the day before and began swinging slowly, very slowly. "Well?" asked another boy, not so bored. Still swinging, Joseph said:

"I saw him this morning."

He swung a full, heavy semicircle, then added:

"He is very sick, he must go to hospital."

"What's wrong with him?"

"Anything . . . broken?"

"No, nothing broken."

"Well then?"

Joseph swung in silence for a full minute before he could answer; then he made up his mind:

"The truth is, he has pernicious anæmia. That's why he must go to hospital, as soon as possible. But of course," he added hastily, "what happened yesterday didn't exactly improve his health."

There was a general slackening of tension. One boy picked up a ball; another a club, playfully. The others began talking in small, easy, unfinished sentences. One boy said: "Oh well, anæmia . . . I believe I have it too."

"Most probably we all have it."

"My father says it's because I refuse to drink milk in the morning."

"No, wrong, wrong! It's not eating fruit that makes one anæmic."

"Make the unfortunate child eat fruit!" they cried in chorus.

Joseph stopped swinging. "You don't understand," he said anxiously. "This isn't ordinary anæmia. Besides, what does it matter what it is? He's got to go to hospital, so that he may get well soon and come back. That's the point. And he's no money for hospital. Somebody's got to help."

He looked round at them again, one by one, intently, feeling blindly for the bond that had held them to him. But it was gone. They were free. One of the boys jumped nimbly over the wooden horse, humming a piece of song. The idle ball was suddenly sent sailing across the gymnasium; somebody sprang forward to catch it; others moved towards him to stop it; from the other end of the gymnasium a boy clapped his hands and called: "Over here! Over here!" The game was on. There was soon an empty space around Joseph. The last boy to leave him called loudly as he sprinted away: "Be sure to give him plenty of fruit!"

Joseph gripped the dumb-bells and began swinging again, slowly, his face quivering with anger and bewilderment.

THAT evening he went home early. After a short visit to Fonda, lying pale, indifferent, and fully dressed in bed, he took a short cut

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to his house, following not a single wheelbarrow, not a single stray dog. His mother sketched a hurried, amazed sign of the cross over her breast when she saw him firmly clearing the kitchen table and bringing out his pen and ink. He said he had much homework to do, and made it understood that he did not wish to be disturbed. His mother was so impressed by the importance of his work—by Education in general—that she stopped grinding coffee, ashamed of the screeching noise she made in the silent kitchen, and took up her sewing. His father, secretly impatient at this solemnity, but not daring to complain, went out to play billiards. The two younger children were still playing somewhere in the neighbourhood, sending their shrill, diamond-hard cries of ecstasy streaming across the streets; while the voice of the man who sold yoghourt kept a steady, mournful bass. They were not called in, in spite of the smoky cold, and darkness descending.

Joseph took up his pen and wrote a letter, which he copied twenty-seven times: one for each boy in his class. It was carefully worded; the style was a conscientious imitation of the old-fashioned Greek used in school circulars and in the teacher's speeches on national feast-days.

This is what each of the twenty-seven letters said:

"My friend,

I regret to inform you that our beloved school-mate Fonda (Xenophon) Mamopoulos passed away this afternoon at 5 p.m. You will realise what a grievous loss this is to his family, his friends, and above all, his country. For he was a worthy Greek.

You are therefore requested to contribute the sum of 10,000 drs. (ten thousand drachmae) that a decent Orthodox funeral may be arranged for him. Further details about the funeral will be given you tomorrow.

May he rest in Peace.

P.S. Mind you say nothing about this to the Teacher, for he may want to POKE HIS NOSE into the causes of our friend's death."

By the time he had finished all twenty-seven letters, Joseph had nearly chewed away the end of his pen. He had never written so much in his life. There was a taste of inky wood in his mouth bitter but substantial, and a pulsing pain in his right forefinger, reminding him of examination day; but he was pleased. He hardly thought of Fonda that night.

Next morning the letters were deftly passed on from hand to hand under the desks, until each boy had one. Joseph sat back quietly, watching. Some boys grew red as they read the letter, then folded it away quickly. Others grew absorbed and smoothed it out under their text-book so as to read it over again, undisturbed. Others glanced back at Joseph with a heavily conspiratorial look. Some looked excited, some stern and heroic; hardly anyone seemed frightened.

The class was exceptionally quiet that morning. When the bell for recess rang, the teacher closed his text-book saying: "I am happy to see that the story of Saint Polycarpus has succeeded in moving your hearts."

As soon as they were out in the gymnasium the boys headed straight for Joseph. No time was lost in circumvolutions. Yesterday's props—clubs and balls, dumb-bells and horses—lay about in the dust unused, inanimate.

"Well, when's it going to be?" rang out the first question, bold, hungry.

"As soon as I get the money," said Joseph, scrutinising them. Most of them promised to give him the money in the afternoon. Two or three had it with them; and one gave him fifteen thousand instead of ten.

"Perhaps—tomorrow afternoon then?"

"Perhaps."

"Does his mother know that we're going to do this?"

"She doesn't know. We're the only ones to know."

"And it's going to be a real funeral—a real, proper funeral."

"A real funeral."

Now they could settle down. They squatted on the ground, cross-legged, and some rode astride on the wooden benches, but sedately. The wind breathed round the corners of the gymnasium, particularly restless, as it usually is when it circles around a very still spot—a camp in the night, a sentinel on a tower.

They looked out at the bare brown playing-field through the gymnasium entrance, which

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was very wide; not really an entrance, but simply the fourth wall missing. They looked out with the expression of people going by in a train. They did not speak much. They were dreaming.

"Oh Joseph, were you there when it happened?"

"Yes. In my very arms." He shut his eyes tight. He remembered; he remembered everything.

"And . . . afterwards?"

"Afterwards. . . ." He hesitated; how was one to describe it? "Afterwards—nothing." He licked his lips, his eyes widened. The word was just right, the word had conquered him. A small wind, whispering "nothing," ran around him twice, then withdrew like a wave. The boys sat on the ground as if they were going to be there for ever. This was not recess; this was—very nearly—the end of school.

Yet after a few minutes the school bell rang, sounding the end of recess. They did not move, but grew, by degrees, anxious.

"But we'll see him, won't we?"

"We'll wash him and oil him . . ."

"We'll dress him—gym clothes, don't you think? They are simpler, and manly."

"No flowers, but leaves."

"Tell me, we'll see him, won't we?"

He hesitated a little. "Yes, I think so. If his relations let us."

"But we don't need any relations about!" One of the boys got up. In pale blazing earnest he asked: "Is this going to be *our* funeral—yes or no?"

The bell rang again, very patiently. Joseph rose to his feet. "Remember," he said briskly, "not a word to the teacher." They looked at him almost in contempt for having said this. His postscript had been quite unnecessary.

He did not go to see Fonda that evening after school. Yet he already had the money; all of it; no one had failed. But he did not take it to Fonda. He said to himself: "Perhaps I'd better wait till tomorrow; they might bring me some more."

He went home very late. He visited all the squares and fountain-places where children were known to play; butted into many games; interrupted several enterprises, and started others; led armies astray and dethroned a score of kings. He imitated the cock's crow, and the call of the yoghourt man. He took an investigation party with him and inspected every single church in town; even the Baptist church. Before each one he shook his head doubtfully; until finally he turned his back on them and gazed out at the low hills that sheltered the town.

But never, not once, did he go anywhere near Fonda's house.

He had been right: several boys brought him some extra money next day at school.

He almost made up his mind to postpone the delivery of the money one more day—just in case. But when he got home that afternoon, his mother had a message for him. "Fonda's mother has been here," she said. "He is not at all well, and has been wondering why you haven't been to see him."

"Not at all well?" he said, dazed, and sat down at the kitchen table. There was a silence.

"Well, aren't you going? Must you wait until it's quite dark? Your father was furious yesterday."

"I'm off," he interrupted her, and leapt to his feet.

He ran out into the street, clutching the money tightly in his pocket. His heart thumped hard against his chest, his mouth was cold. He could not gather his thoughts together; they jostled untidily in his head, matching his crazy pace. It was as if he had woken up from a dream, and found the world in chaos. The boys, he had forgotten about the boys. What would he tell them? He would have to tell them—tomorrow, after tomorrow, in a week at the most. Tell them what? That Fonda was not dead? That he was simply—what was it? —"not at all well"? Not at all well, that's what his mother had said. And what did that mean? Did it not mean—"almost dead"? Almost dead, so perhaps it was all right. Suddenly he realised, horrified, the turn of his thoughts, and cried out in protest. "Fonda, Fonda," he stammered, his heart dipping with love and fear, with hope and despair. "Fonda," he cried, evoking his friend's pale head, his ugly teeth, his straight ugly hair.

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Fonda's head, lying back, eyes closed, motionless, a vision not of this world.

"Fonda," he repeated, not knowing what he meant.

THE door was opened by Fonda's mother. She smiled at him—a thin, girlish woman.

"Well?" he cried, hardly hearing himself, "is he dead?"

She crossed herself. "Don't say such things!" She dismissed her indignation quickly and motioned him in. "Come in, he is better today."

Fonda was sitting up in bed under a big, red blanket. He still wore his thick, well-patched coat; he was gazing at the contents of a cardboard box lying open on his lap. Joseph sat down slowly on the edge of his bed and looked at him without speaking, as if he did not recognise him. Fonda smiled sleepily, then went back to his box.

Mechanically, Joseph dug his hand into his pocket and brought out the money. He held it clumsily for a moment, then dumped it into the cardboard box. "There," he said numbly, "I've brought you some money, so that you can go to hospital."

Fonda's mother had been gently folding some clothes over a chair. At the mention of money she turned round sharply and came to the bed. She looked down at the notes in the box; they were slowly unfolding after the pressure in Joseph's pocket, like a live thing.

"My darling little boy," she cried at last, "how, where did you get all this?"

"For Fonda's hospital," he said stubbornly.

"But how . . . where . . ." she rambled on, and kneeling, she began to count the money.

Suddenly Joseph asked in a clipped voice: "You'll take him away, won't you?"

"Yes, yes, of course! Now my little boy can go to hospital."

"When?"

"Now my little boy can get well . . ."

"When will you take him to hospital?"

"As soon as we're ready . . . in three or four days, I don't know."

"No. Not three or four days. Tomorrow."

She laughed softly. "Ah no, tomorrow is too soon, we'll never have time . . ."

"Tomorrow!" he shouted in a rage.

She looked up at him, startled. He flung out his fist and upset the cardboard box on Fonda's lap. The notes fluttered to the floor. He leapt to his feet and stamped on them frantically, shouting: "Tomorrow! Tomorrow! Away with him!" Then he turned and fled from the house, sobbing.

The World-surface

From hand to hand the objects pass—
the specimen of Kang Hsi, that urn
transcending what it holds, the harpsichord
sleeping in the room without a sound—
les choses utiles, les choses inutiles—
mined and determined by earth-labourers!
The human hand (a sculptured thing)
ejects its work into the air
destroyed by time. Continuously
it adds the necessary glaze,
blending the brief unquestioned tones
into the song,—oh what wound
can kill the gnomes of art?

Howard Griffin

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Michael Polanyi

On Liberalism and Liberty

FOR many years, the discussion of public affairs throughout the free world has been dominated by a controversy over economic planning. Anti-planners have warned that planning would inevitably suppress liberty as it had in Russia, while the planners have answered that these political consequences could and should be avoided. Both sides seemed to agree that, in Russia at any rate, totalitarianism arose as a by-product of economic planning.

Yet this assumption has little root in historical fact. Lenin published his intention to establish a new type of state, which was to supersede parliamentary democracy, upon his arrival in Russia on April 17th, 1917. In the course of the following weeks, he identified this new state with the "dictatorship of the proletariat," which was to be "an authority not based on law, not on elections, but directly on the armed force of some portion of the population." Nor was this an improvisation: in 1906 Lenin had already demanded "unrestricted power, beyond law, resting on force in the strictest sense of the word." Thus the suppression by the Bolsheviks of the Russian Constituent Assembly, the proscription of all opposition, the lawless rule of the secret police, and the universal imposition of a Marxist ideology, were all long premeditated as purely political principles. They were in fact put into execution in the first years immediately following the revolution, before any extensive measures of economic planning had been undertaken.

The true relationship between totalitarianism and economic planning is obscured by the ambiguity of the term "planning." Economic planning, in the sense of replacing the functions of the market by the central direction of all industrial production, is a clear conception, and it was this kind of planning that the Bolsheviks originally intended to institute. A resolute attempt to put it into operation was undertaken by the Soviet Government in 1920, but the attempt broke down so quickly that the Government could successfully conceal ever having made it. It blanketed the event under the name of "War Communism," dismissing it thereby as a purely accidental phenomenon. Though this effort was never repeated, the claim of conducting economic life according to plan was nevertheless vigorously upheld.

Yet Russian economic planning consists now merely in the Government's undertaking a number of heavy investments and ostentatious building schemes, combined with a general hue and cry for more production everywhere. Firms may exceed their planned production to any extent and are celebrated for it, without any questions being asked about how the plan should be readjusted accordingly. Overproduction in one field is actually taken to compensate for a short fall below the planned target in another—imagine a bridge builder who would acclaim the "overfulfilment" of one pillar as compensation for the "underfulfilment" of another! What is called "planning" here is a loose collection of enterprises, initiated centrally, which the managers on the spot are left to adjust to each other by competitively scrambling for materials and men through a system of more or less regulated, and more or

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less legal, markets. Such coordination as this economic system shows is due to the commercial character of the day-to-day decisions taken by the managers in the pursuit of the well-being of their particular enterprises. While the planners continue to dramatise the system as "central planning," by dressing it up in an elaborate socialist nomenclature and accompanying its operations by much tub-thumping and posturing, it is actually a market-economy, rigged to a considerable extent by government intervention. It is not appreciably nearer to the original Communist idea of an economic system not dependent on the market than are the systems prevailing in Britain, France, or the United States.

It is true, of course, that in capturing power and suppressing liberty Lenin aimed at the abolition of capitalism. But the establishment of a totalitarian dictatorship came first, and this dictatorship was continued, not for the purpose of carrying out an economic revolution, but—on the contrary—to take its place emotionally. Far from being a mere incident in the establishment of a new economic system, monolithic discipline itself became the dynamic principle of the Russian Revolution. It feeds the fire of its illusions, among which the pretence of having created a new economic system is still vital to the régime.

It is well to remember that Hitler established a totalitarian system in Germany without any pronounced hostility towards private enterprise or any intention of comprehensive economic planning. The totalitarian revolutions of our time have been actuated primarily by political, not by economic motives. What were these motives? I should like to suggest that they were supplied by the liberal movement itself, wherever, unrestrained by respect for proper authority, it degenerated into nihilism.

Freedom and Civility

POLITICAL and cultural freedom, in the absolute sense, is incompatible with the existence of fixed social relations. Freedom can operate in society only within such limits as are set to it by the established political authority and the established moral consensus, both of which define and preserve the existing social framework. Liberalism differs from other systems of social relations in the nature of the authority to which it submits. However, any attempt by liberalism to define this authority ends by revealing a crucial ambiguity in the liberal position.

Free institutions themselves, like parliaments, independent law courts, a free press, are of course legally established in free countries, and are supported there by the authority and power of the government. But such institutions inevitably also legalise ample opportunities for their own paralysis and possible destruction. Hitler was legally appointed Chancellor on January 30th, 1933 by President Hindenburg, just as Béla Kun had been legally appointed Prime Minister of Hungary on March 21st, 1919 by President Kàrolyi. Senator McCarthy has shown that Congressional Committees could legally exercise powers which would destroy democratic government in the United States. Weakest perhaps against legal subversion are the free institutions of Britain, which could all be abolished by a simple majority in Parliament.

Moreover, there is a difference in the nature of the authority exercised by free institutions, as compared with the authority of despotism, which makes despotism more stable than freedom. Free institutions can function only in a society spontaneously united in giving support to them, and no power can enforce such spontaneous collaboration. You cannot suppress a determined rebellion without sharply curtailing freedom. Even such a comparatively harmless conspiratorial activity as that of the Irish Republican Army in England during 1939 could only be met by a virtual suspension of the *habeas corpus*. The physical suppression of a more widespread terrorist movement, like that of the Arabs in Morocco, may give rise to terroristic counter-measures, such as the clubbing by French soldiers of six thousand suspects, of whom twenty died, in Port Lyautey in August 1954. However that may be, any resolute conspiracy determined to subvert by force a free government necessarily reduces the area of freedom; the government can neither stand fast against it, nor retreat from it, without some sacrifice of freedom.

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Admittedly, no government, however tyrannical, can remain in power entirely by force; it must have at least a Prætorian guard of devoted followers on whose loyalty it can rely. The *apparat* organised by Stalin could reduce this requirement to a minimum, but only because it was built into a milieu that, though resenting Stalin's personal rule, was loyal to Communism, which would have been endangered by the overthrow of Stalin. Moreover, a police state can gradually enforce sufficient voluntary concord by a monopoly of publicity and education. It is not inconceivable that in the course of time, a modern despotic government may thus make itself ideologically so secure that it could continue to rule without using more force than free governments do.

Just as the practice of freedom cannot be secured by any set of formal rules, so also the essential meaning of freedom will always escape any attempt at a formal definition. It must be defined in terms of specific examples, if it is to be distinguished from servitude. Only within a free society can free institutions preserve freedom, as the Soviet constitution and Soviet elections remind us; and the very words "freedom" and "servitude" can carry their true connotations only when uttered within a free country.

THE authority to which political and cultural freedom is correlated is, therefore, the authority which prevails in fact in what we regard as free countries; not in the explicit content of their constitutional rules, but in the tacit practice of interpreting these rules. It is on this unspecifiable art of conducting free activities that the preservation of freedom must rely; and similarly, all formulations of liberal principles must derive their meaning from a prior knowledge, diffused inarticulately among the citizens of free countries, of what freedom is. Thus, both the meaning and stability of freedom appears rooted in the liberal tradition, the presence of which we accredit in certain countries acknowledged to be free. The political and moral authority correlated to freedom is the authority of this tradition, as established in these countries.

This authority dwells within the peoples of free countries and is only occasionally reaffirmed symbolically by national rituals, solemn or joyful. But all forms of freedom, such as self-government, the rule of law, and tolerance of religious and irreligious convictions, are sustained by this authority which ensures civil intercourse, disseminates a widespread sense of public responsibility, and fosters affection for one's own people. Where these arts and affections are lacking, or to the extent to which they are lost, a malaise spreads through civic life, and freedom becomes insecure—as happened throughout Western Europe, including England, during the 1930's.

Various writers, both in Britain and America, have accordingly acknowledged in recent years that traditions—specifically the traditional practices of freedom—can alone secure the continued existence of free institutions. These writers attempt to reconcile progress with its original enemy, tradition, by affirming that the process of continuous social improvement forms a part of the traditions of a free society (as against that of a feudal or ritualistic society) and that any progress which proceeds step-wise must rely on the existing society as its matrix, and thereby testify to its own respect for tradition.

We shall better appreciate this appeal to tradition as the ultimate ground on which all explicit formulations of liberty must rest by recalling how the same appeal was made 165 years ago by Edmund Burke in the face of a rising Jacobinism.

The Jacobins had got hold of two English political theories in a French version. The first, originating with Hobbes, claimed the absolute sovereignty of a secular society in pursuit of its own interest and, in consequence, also the absolute power of the sovereign to enforce what is necessary in the social interest. The second theory, going back to Locke, sought to establish freedom by demanding that governments should derive their powers from the consent of the governed. The two were amalgamated by Rousseau into the doctrine of the General Will, which may force men to be free.

The Jacobins used this theory to justify the

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comprehensive destruction of the historic framework of France and the establishment in its place of a rule of perfect virtue and happiness. Such a comprehensive transformation leaves no justification to any opposition, for it abolishes all standards by which it could be criticised. The revolutionary authority thus eliminates the logical possibility of ever being judged wrong: and any opposition to it must appear, therefore, as always totally evil.

Burke's appeal to tradition involved a qualification both of Locke's theory and of Hobbes'. When he described society as "a partnership in all science, a partnership in all art, a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection" and declared that "as the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born," he restricted the freedom of the subjects to exercise their consent, as well as the sovereign's right to exercise his power. Thus he also restrained the political theory of freedom from ever carrying its own conclusions to the point where it might destroy the framework of a civic tradition on which this theory is predicated.

The Legacy of Jacobinism

BURKE's teaching, which appealed from the spoken to the unspoken rules of freedom, remained henceforth the silent presupposition of British liberalism. It was not explicitly incorporated in its theory as formulated by Mill, and it could not be, for the prevailing liberal movement of the time was Benthamite in its emphasis on legal and social reform, and denounced tradition as the chief obstacle to progress. But reliance on civic tradition was retained implicitly in the presuppositions of a natural social harmony and of a common good—presuppositions on which the liberal theory of the 19th century rested.

In the light of Burke's teaching, the outbreak of Jacobinism was due to the literal pursuit of sound political principles within a community not equipped with the traditional practice and wisdom through which these principles must be interpreted. The Rights of Man were a good summary of the legal maxims defining the ancient liberties enjoyed by Englishmen and as such could be effectively incorporated into the Constitution of the United States whose people shared the practice of these liberties. To Frenchmen it was merely a speculative doctrine, the attempted realisation of which inevitably led to disaster: as they tried to work from a recipe without the know-how, the stuff blew up into their faces.

But Burkeian admonitions were inevitably condemned to remain fruitless. For it is of the essence of a tradition to remain unformulated, and traditions can therefore be transmitted only by the personal apprenticeship of succeeding generations to the example of their elders. The doctrine of Burke could only prophesy the doom of communities not already blessed with a tradition of civic freedom: they must choose between continued stagnation or the risk of being disrupted and destroyed by speculative excesses.

The disasters of the 20th century were essentially the fulfilment of this doom to which Burke's teaching so casually assigned the non-English-speaking peoples. The heritage of Jacobinism continued to alienate European intellectuals from the existing social order and to fix their aspirations on a comprehensive reconstruction of society to be achieved by a violent upheaval. Yet before these disasters set in, liberalism had gained great achievements in Europe, well beyond the limits allowed by the prognosis implied in Burke's teaching. The soil of Europe was not so unprepared for the implantation of freedom as it might have seemed at the time of the outbreak of Jacobinism. For, though most continental countries lacked a complete liberal tradition, many ancient strains of freedom were woven into the fabric of their culture. The religious freedom of Jews and Mohammedans was secure in the 13th century over important Mediterranean regions of Europe. Intellectual emancipation from priestly authority prevailed throughout most of Italy during the Renaissance, and intellectual freedom was renewed under Enlightened Absolutism. Frederick II of Prussia established a large measure of religious tolerance. Though the legal guarantees of free-

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dom were incomplete under his rule, the majesty of the law was acknowledged by Frederick as superior to that of the King. And, already, the new spirit of nationalism was fostering everywhere that sense of civic conviviality which makes popular self-government possible.

Deriving guidance from these traditional strains, liberalism spread gradually into Europe after the French Revolution. The process became steady and rapid after the defeats of Austria by Prussia and Italy in 1866–67. The period from 1867 to 1914, in which free institutions arose throughout the Continent, also saw the gradual assuagement of the revolutionary spirit, at least in Western and Central Europe. The spectre which—according to Marx's Manifesto—haunted the Chancelleries of Europe in 1848 had dissolved by the beginning of the 20th century, Marxism itself having been domesticated by the German Social Democratic party.

THUS, for a time, the prophecy flowing from Burke's teaching was mercifully mocked by the victory of civility all over Western and Central Europe. But this prophecy came true further East, in Russia, with shattering effects on all the previous achievements of liberalism. Here in Russia, there had arisen an excess of theoretical aspirations over practical wisdom, even more extravagant than in 18th century France. The years in which this explosive mixture was formed were those of the seventh decade of the 19th century, which Trotsky has called the "little 18th century" of Russia. This decade produced the nihilist movement with its almost insane hatred of existing institutions, amounting to a total repudiation of all human ties. Nihilism called for merciless violence to destroy society and achieve power on its ruins, and thus produced the conspiratorial conception of political action on which the Communist movement was to be based. In this conspiratorial milieu, the theories of Marx spread rapidly, for they endowed the prevailing apocalyptic vision with an aura of scientific necessity.

The totalitarianism of Lenin was more comprehensive than that of Jacobinism, to the same extent to which nihilist scepticism goes beyond mere anti-religious rationalism. A dictatorship of "Virtue" and "Reason" retains idealistic standards which a strict materialism ignores, and the scope of a materialistic ideology is correspondingly much wider and more detailed. Its imposition necessarily involves a more complete suppression of liberty.

Russian totalitarianism spread in the wake of liberal ideas in Asia and Eastern Europe, carried mainly by discontented and zealous intellectuals, Konrad Heiden's "armed bohemians," inexperienced in peaceful political life. Its example gained followers also throughout Europe, in sufficient numbers to disrupt civic concord and to imperil freedom in countries like Germany, Austria, Italy, and Hungary, which had already successfully passed through the danger zone of liberal transformation. Freedom was eventually destroyed in those regions by a Fascist counter-revolution which had armed itself with the nihilism of its Communist opponents.

The Second World War ravaged large parts of Europe and left dominion over them divided between Stalin and his Western allies. But during the time which has since elapsed, a new stage of political development seems to have emerged in these areas. The peoples of countries which had previously been internally divided by frenzied factions have shown a new capacity for attending harmoniously to the conduct of their public affairs. Germany, Austria, Finland, Belgium, which were scenes of latent or open civil war during the 1930's, represent today examples of civic reconciliation which offer prospects for the lasting establishment of free institutions. In France, also, political warfare is much less violent than it was in the 1930's, and the tension seems to be ebbing year by year. Even in countries which do not strikingly show this process of re-civilisation, the intensity with which violent political illusions are held has undoubtedly decreased. The shattering floods raised by the Russian Revolution seem to be receding in Europe even while they are still mounting higher in Asia. Of the eight European satellites which came under the dominion of Soviet Russia after the Second World War, one of the most important, Yugoslavia, has since

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deserted her, and has achieved a measure of internal reconciliation. In at least four others, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, Communism is as universally rejected as in neighbouring Finland, West Germany, and Austria.

A Rebirth of Liberalism?

HOWEVER, the souring of old illusions does not necessarily produce a fresh appetite for reality. There is still an inordinate amount of political hysteria about. Much of it is the hysteria of anti-capitalists who nurse their unchanging resentment of existing society, even though they no longer can see any radical alternative to this society. But in part it also stems from excited anti-socialists who still keep confusing public life by their hypochondriac fears. With their gaze fixed on the lands stricken by Communism, they detect incipient symptoms everywhere of "creeping socialism": an obsession quite widespread in America. Too many people are still glaring at each other through the angry masks of obsolete ideologies.

Moreover, our discarded costumes have become the raging fashion among hundreds of millions of Asiatics and Africans, deluded by our past examples and precepts. The theories of Marxist Socialism, about to be forgotten in the countries of their origin, are fast becoming the centre-piece of Asiatic and African folklore. The violent sentiments of the illiterate native masses—universal hatred of the white man, Moslem fanaticism in the Arab countries, orgiastic frenzy in Africa—are all harnessed without difficulty by a Westernised native intelligentsia to their own sophisticated conspiratorial projects.

Even though Western opinion may be on its way to recover its balance, can it appease the turmoil which its earlier teachings have caused among its Eastern and African followers? Perhaps not, unless the Soviet Union adds its influence to our own in this direction—as it might conceivably do. The loss of Yugoslavia to the Soviet Empire may have educational effects on the successors of Stalin similar to those which the loss of the United States to the British Empire had on the successors of Lord North and George III. Assume, for example, that Tito finds he has profited, in terms of internal stability, by his lenience towards Djilas and Dedjier. May not the Russians then plump for Nagy against Rákosi in Hungary? If so, they could hardly fail to try this method of stabilisation-by-relaxation also internally in Russia, and in its relation to other affiliated states.

These speculations may seem fantastic; but then who would have believed in 1948 that six years later Tito would be forming a military alliance with Greece and Turkey, even while amicably negotiating a trade agreement with Soviet Russia? The next six years may offer chances for even more profound transformations. In any case, the kind of speculations I have outlined do illustrate in my view the kind of world policies to which an energetic revival of liberalism throughout the West might open the way.

We are spending far too much time beating our breasts and sympathetically trying to see the follies of Russians, Asiatics, and Africans from *their* point of view (which in any case is but the point of view we held and transmitted to them thirty years ago). If we looked at these happenings instead from *our* point of view, on which we *now* stand, we would be more likely to discover right ways of taking action; and besides, this might also give us a chance of recovering the intellectual leadership of the world which the exportation of a doctrinaire liberalism has foolishly lost us.

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TV and Films

Orwell on the Screen

A needle slid into Winston's arm. Almost in the same instant a blissful, healing warmth spread all through his body. The pain was already half-forgotten. He opened his eyes and looked up gratefully at O'Brien. At sight of the heavy, lined face, so ugly and so intelligent, his heart seemed to turn over. If he could have moved he would have stretched out a hand and laid it on O'Brien's arm. He had never loved him so deeply as at this moment, and not merely because he had stopped the pain. The old feeling, that at bottom it did not matter whether O'Brien was a friend or an enemy, had come back. O'Brien was a person who could be talked to. Perhaps one did not want to be loved so much as to be understood. O'Brien had tortured him to the edge of lunacy, and in a little while, it was certain, he would send him to his death. It made no difference. In some sense that went deeper than friendship, they were intimates: somewhere or other, although the actual words might never be spoken, there was a place where they could meet and talk.

THERE are not many insights in the post-war novel as subtle and affecting as that conveyed in Winston Smith's tragic fixation on the father-figure of O'Brien. It was indicative of the quality of the recent adaptation for television of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that it managed to realise this relationship in pictures and dialogue without divesting it of its subtlety. Here, indeed, was adaptation of a high order, recapturing the slow, remorseless tempo at which the book explores the reaches of despair, and so visualising the ordeal by torture that it never for a moment degenerated from a calculated process of mental pulverisation into an exercise of mere sadism. It was an adaptation instinct with tact and restraint.

To a large number of viewers, however, the telecast appeared no better than a horror comic, and the BBC was bombarded with complaints. Some campaigns against the BBC are born in the offices of the type of newspaper which holds that everyone except its readers is guilty until he is proved innocent. On this occasion, however, the national press mostly took the Corporation's part. The public evidently needed no encouragement to make it feel outraged. Although the BBC received a letter of appreciation for every three or four of abuse, and while some of those written in abuse clearly issued from the Party, there is little doubt that the viewing public as a whole was shocked and resentful.

You have endeavoured [wrote one correspondent] to open the Gates of Hell to millions of people only just recovering from two Diabolical Wars and who are painfully seeking a tranquil mind in which to inspire the coming generation.

This complaint was a recurrent one.

We who lived through the last war, know of the depths to which human beings descended—it is still unbelievable—and we want to make sure it is just a nightmare which will never be repeated. The best way to do this is to endeavour to *uplift* public thought to better and higher things, not drag it in filth and godlessness.

For omitting to give uplift, for failing to reassure, for not pandering to complacency, above all, for neglecting to "entertain," Orwell was accused in letter after letter of having a diseased or a depraved mind. Those who did not find the play merely "degrading" or "disgusting" or filled with "the distortion of sex" considered it a ludicrous fantasy which could never happen here ("There is no likelihood of a totalitarian tyranny in this country"). For some, it was devoid of any message or moral. For others, the message and the moral were there all right, but were considered too

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unpalatable, too discouraging, to be communicated to the general public.

Perhaps for a select intellectual audience some subtleties may have emerged from the plot but I feel sure that for the countless millions of ordinary everyday folk it is not suitable for them to be confronted with the frightening possibility of the loss of all human dignity and I find it quite immoral that we should be left at the end of the play by the fact that evil has triumphed over good.

Ultimately it was the possibility that evil might triumph over good that viewers could not stomach. It was felt that recognition of this possibility was already an acknowledgement of defeat.

Not only is the play in infinite bad taste but its theme is one of such utter despair as to give viewers the impression that there is no future for mankind and the only course open for us is to commit suicide now.

It would seem that, as the poet says, "human kind cannot bear very much reality." And the use of the words "realistic" and "truth" in the following passage neatly sums up the general public's attitude.

On the one hand we hear how shocking are horror comics, and yet a service which has the power to disseminate beauty and truth to millions of people chooses to spend thousands of pounds presenting something far more horrible and far more realistic than the worst of any so-called horrific papers.

It all boils down to a reminder that we are living in a society with a distaste for facing the facts—a society in which a Labour Member of Parliament can ask a Minister to alter names of hospitals (such as the Royal Cancer Hospital) "which had an alarming effect upon the patients" (*The Times*, June 13th, 1952), a society in which the residents of a health resort can procure the removal of the word "cemetery" from the time-tables of the local buses (*News Chronicle*, May 24th, 1954), a society whose most prevalent attitude to violence in the arts was crystallised in the story told by Arthur Koestler (ENCOUNTER, November 1953) of a speaker at a wartime PEN Club meeting who was protesting that "violence rarely plays a part in ordinary people's lives, and it is positively indecent for an artist to devote so much time and space to that kind of thing"—while overhead the bombs were whistling and the ack-ack banging.

THE telecasting of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has, at any rate, added to our national vocabulary. "We, like Big Brother," wrote an angry viewer to the BBC, "are watching you *all* the time." "Pig Brother is watching you" say the cinema posters. The film is the new British full-length cartoon adaptation of *Animal Farm*.

This film is a failure æsthetically, imaginatively, and intellectually. The style of the drawing is a feeble parody of Disney: even Boxer the cart-horse, symbol of the working class, might be a reject from the Olympian pastures in *Fantasia*. The humour as well as the idealisations are largely Disney-esque: thus much of the would-be comic relief comes from a well-meaning goofy gosling which is a pure Disney type. The main thing about the film that is not Disney-esque is its poverty of comic invention, and it is not as if the blame for this could be placed upon the book. On the credit side, there are a few moments of tragic invention which have been added to the story and add to its impact. When the "traitors" are slaughtered, a carrion-bird averts its eyes. After the slaughter, when the words "without cause" are added to the slogan "No animal shall kill any other animal," they are painted in in blood. And the sound-track is quite harrowing when Benjamin the donkey runs braying shrilly down the road in pursuit of the knacker's van with Boxer in it.

The essential weakness of the film lies, not in the realisation of detail, not even in that the drawing is as second-rate as it is second-hand, but in its wilful misinterpretation of Orwell's central intention. The point of *Animal Farm* is that it is not an allegory of ideas, not a speculative fantasy. It is a precise satire on the most terrible phenomenon of recent history, the tragedy of Bolshevism, and nobody who has read the book can fail to be aware of this. When the film critic of *The Spectator* describes the film as "this bitter satire on the Welfare State," it has to be inferred that the lady is ignorant of the book-of-the-film rather than that she has missed the point of the film itself. For the film does everything it can to obscure the book's meaning, to treat it as a vague, general sermon instead of an indictment of events that actually happened.

The thing that obsessed Orwell most of all about Soviet totalitarianism was its ruthless dishonesty, its practice of "doublethink." Orwell's loathing for this is manifest in three

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themes in *Animal Farm*. One is the gradual transformation of the revolutionary slogans ("All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others" and the rest). The second is the opportunism with which the porcine government suddenly make allies of their enemies and enemies of their allies. The third is the establishment of a legendary traitor-figure whose machinations can be held responsible for all mistakes of government and even circumstantial misfortunes. The importance for Orwell of these latter two themes is shown by their recurrence in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, where the roles of the neighbouring farmers, Mr. Pilkington of Foxwood and Mr. Frederick of Pinchfield, are taken over by the states of Eurasia and Eastasia, and that of Snowball, the Trotsky of the piece, by Emmanuel Goldstein (rhymes with Bronstein). But both these themes all but disappear from the *Animal Farm* film. It suppresses the destruction of the half-completed windmill by a storm, which, in one of the book's supreme ironies, gives Comrade Napoleon the opportunity to put the blame on Snowball. And it excludes Mr. Pilkington and Mr. Frederick altogether. This, incidentally, entails handing over the leadership of the invasion of Animal Farm from Mr. Frederick to Mr. Jones, the exiled proprietor. So distortion by omission leads to positive distortion which makes nonsense of history—or would if the film, like the book, bore any relation to history.

These expurgations have been made, no doubt, in the interests of simplification. But there are other distortions for which no such justification is conceivable. The most cheap and inept is that of giving old Major, the prophet of the Revolution, the voice and appearance of Sir Winston Churchill. This again is absurd only if *Animal Farm* is supposed to bear some relation to the facts. But the closing scenes introduce an absurdity which is internally nonsensical. The guests of the pigs at the banquet are not men but other pigs. Does this mean that there are other farms where the animals have revolted and the pigs taken over? We have not hitherto been told that this has happened. Furthermore, surely the point of the banquet should be that the pigs have sold out to the human leaders of other states, that is, to creatures of the same species as those they once deposed? And surely this remains a point that has to be made even if the film is trying to be general and not particular in application? Not to have made it destroys all the poignancy of the ending.

> *No question, now, what had happened to the faces of the pigs. The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which.*

Instead of this, in the film the creatures outside merely have a momentary hallucination that the roomful of pigs have human faces. Whereupon they rebel.

The hopeful ending grafted on to the story is not the most unforgivable thing about the film. It may soften the pessimism which was so fundamental in Orwell, but it gives no promise that the new revolution will not have the same sad outcome as the old. In suggesting that history is cyclic, the film's ending does not deny its moral, so long as the moral is to be read as general. But once again it goes against the facts, giving a final demonstration that the film is not meant to be interpreted as a satire on the Soviet Union, that it might just as well be a "savage satire on the Welfare State."

It is, of course, arguable that the dramatic effect of an adaptation of Orwell's book is likely to be heightened by suppressing local references in order to give it a more general relevance. This is all very well in theory; only it ignores everything that the book means to us. *Animal Farm* is not yet a *Gulliver's Travels*, nor can we know now whether it ever will be, whether it can ever transcend its immediate frame of reference to acquire a universal validity. So far as we are concerned, its validity is inextricably bound up with its particular historical references. For it tells a story in which we have been involved—the story of a process of disenchantment which almost every thinking person with any human sympathy born in the 20th century has shared. The future may see it otherwise, but for us *Animal Farm* is nothing if it is not the testament of Orwell's hatred of Stalinism. For us, its poignancy lies in its discovery of a dramatic pattern in that series of events known as "The Betrayal of the Left."

David Sylvester

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Six Poems

AGE IN SEPTEMBER

In what a short while now, the disinherited
Must leave, alone,
This blessedness, they have so little merited,
So slightly known,
Bees on the dahlias
And sun on stone.

MESSAGE TO THE FAST

Great cloud above the houses passing by
Have you this morning seen the lonely moors,
And now proceed across my square of sky?
O tell this safe suburban out-of-doors,
These chimney-pots and smoke from kitchen ranges
And tell these lamp-posts, tell the baker's cart,
Tell my accustomed room and tell my heart
What rocks and nameless streams you passed above.
But when the wind changes
Take back to solitude my faithless love.

RELEASE

O what wide shore,
What vision of a plain
By the last bird deserted, and last light,
Will lead me from this register of pain,
Absolve me from my bone-surrounded brain
In amplitude of night
To feel no more.

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by Frances Cornford

SEA-SHORE SEPARATION

He: That soft sea-weed is your heart
Did you know?
And this bleaching bone
My own.

She: I read a ballad long ago
About two lovers kept apart.
Two roses, white and red,
Joined their graves when they were dead.
Their own hearts, the ballad said.

He: Why cry, there is no need.
Out of mercy let me go.
Nothing, nothing can unite
A sensual weed,
A bone bleached white.

SUMMER MORNING FROM A WINDOW

Know in yourself the dark and only breast
From which a million million creatures spring;
Then you can bear, at peace like all the rest,
The passion of this multiplicity,
Then only dare in quivering light to see
Each intricate astounding separate thing.

EPITAPH FOR MAOU: A CAT

Strange sickness fell upon this perfect creature,
Who walked the equal friend of man and nature.
Enclosed in fever like a sultry cloud,
Supine he lay who once was cool and proud;
Till to his eyes, unasking but afraid,
The old reply of endless night was made.

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Letter from Saigon

Passage to Freedom

I WAS one of three journalists invited by the United States Navy to witness the evacuation of refugees from the Tonking Delta. There were only the three of us, yet the press conference that the commanding officer, Admiral Gano, held on his flagship in Along Bay was an extremely ceremonious affair. The ranking officers formed a semicircle around the Admiral. An almost ecclesiastical sobriety hung in the air. "This operation," announced the Admiral, "is one of the most humanitarian tasks our country has ever undertaken. We are rescuing a million people from the clutches of Communism. We are leading them to freedom. . . . I don't think the United States Navy in its entire history has ever undertaken anything of such proportions and consequence." The Admiral's voice rang with missionary zeal. "But this is not only one of the Navy's most humanitarian jobs," continued the Admiral, "it is also one of the fastest and most efficient." And he began to recall how on August 9th, 1954, Rear-Admiral Sabin had been flown to Haiphong to discuss with the French military the technical details of this mission which had already been prepared, diplomatically, by Ambassador Heath and General O'Daniel. Within a week, the ships had been ready, and on August 18th, 1954, the first transport had left Haiphong with a cargo of refugees. During the following days, an entire fleet had assembled at Haiphong, Along Bay, and the port of Tourain. And soon this fleet, reinforced by chartered freighters and U.S. Navy transports with civilian crews, had reached a monthly capacity of some 100,000 refugees. However, continued the Admiral, this transport capacity had never been —nor would it ever be—fully utilised, since the refugees poured into the ports in a most unpredictable, fluctuating fashion—and the French merchant marine kept a jealous watch to prevent American competition from seriously interfering with their own monopolistic hold on transport contracts.

Officially the French have gratefully acknowledged American aid in the evacuation, but their gratitude has become somewhat tainted by their jealousy over America's growing influence in Indo-China. Thus Lieutenant Lacroix, the Frenchman with whom I shared a cabin on the "General R. L. Howse," regarded the situation a bit more cynically than Admiral Gano. His attitude was negative and defeatist, and he displayed the desperate humour which today characterises the prevailing mood of the French in Indo-China: the feeling that everything one may do is useless; that the Americans, with all their overwhelming passion for salvaging things, are only the involuntary protagonists of a colossal farce.

"You know," he told me, "the Geneva agreement, and the evacuation of North Vietnam, have put France in a pretty bad spot, morally, with the loyal inhabitants of that country. Especially with the Catholics who fought on our side against the Communists. We could not simply abandon them to their fate, to Communist vengeance and persecution. Therefore, we offered to evacuate all those who feared for their lives. And we hoped that only a few would accept this offer. But what happened? The people in South Vietnam began a tremendous propaganda campaign: 'Come to the South. Choose a new home. The Americans are sending money. You'll get everything you want—new houses, tools, farm animals. You'll live in camps where

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you won't have to work. And you'll get plenty to eat.'

"You only had to say this once. Is it really a sacrifice for these people to take it easy, instead of slaving in a rice-paddy, and to receive 12 piastres a day, and six piastres for each of their innumerable children, for doing nothing? It's paradise. Today we have 400,000 refugees, many times the number we had anticipated. Anti-Communism has become a convenient excuse for laziness. You'll see it when they come aboard. Don't leave anything within reaching distance of your cabin window. It will disappear. They steal anything that is not nailed down. You know what happened a few days ago in a camp near Haiphong? When a sudden gust of wind hit the camp all the beautiful American tents collapsed. Why? Because the refugees had sold the tent poles for a few piastres and replaced them with sticks of bamboo. Those are your political heroes, your martyrs."

The difference in the French and American view of the evacuation became also obvious when at noon two French landing-barges pulled up beside the "General Howse." These flat boats were jam-packed with human bodies. The curious geometric pattern of the pointed yellow straw hats of the Vietnamese was interrupted, here and there, by the mushrooming, big black umbrellas of the notables with their close-cropped grey hair and their black, turban-shaped headgear. Yet it was not a very picturesque sight. There were none of the beautiful long gowns Annamite women wear on festive occasions, the white, red, and blue wraps which in their tight and simple lines seem to echo the latest Dior creations. An earthy, purplish brown predominated, the colour of the short, straight blouses or shirts the peasants wear over black Chinese trousers. And the crowd was not really at its best, physically. They had spent six hours on the rough sea travelling the fifty miles between Haiphong and Along Bay, and most of them had been seasick.

A gangplank was lowered from the American ship to the bouncing landing-barge, and the metal bar at its end slid back and forth, to the rhythm of the waves, over the planks of the small craft. The first refugee who tried to approach the gangplank suddenly saw his feet endangered by the rolling bar and in terror he leaped back into the bustling crowd behind him. The load on his carrying-pole began to topple. The hemp ropes which held his miserable bundle came apart. Dented coffee pots, rusty tin cans, straw mats, a few filthy spoons and forks fell down upon the deck. The old man scampered forward to pick up his earthly treasures, hardly worth a few pennies, but the French marines bellowed: "*Mort de dieu*—get going." They grabbed the shaking, wrinkled figure and tossed him over the menacing bar on to the gangplank. The young woman who followed him also seemed to be scared of the rocking plank. Trembling, she jumped back and forth. If this went on with each of the 2,200 refugees scheduled to go on board the "General R. L. Howse," they would never make it. The French sailors cursed. Angrily their hands reached into the crowd, they grabbed a body and hurled it on to the gangplank. Slowly the human column moved upward: howling children, on their hands and knees, crawling from step to step; bent old women, clinging fearfully to the railings; now and then a pretty young girl; and then another burdened old man with a goatee, carrying a parcel in his mouth like a dog.

On the barge, these refugees had been moved by the curses of the French sailors, but as soon as they appeared on the deck of the American ship helping hands were extended to them. Each swaying figure who reached the top of the gangplank was immediately escorted by a U.S. sailor, and American officers did not shy from picking up a Vietnamese carrying pole and helping a refugee with his belongings. Clearly, they wanted to show the French (and the Vietnamese, too, no doubt) that Christian compassion was better than "colonial" arrogance. Contemptuous glances were cast upon the French sailors in the landing-barges, and for days the French Navy was the whipping-boy of all discussions on the "General R. L. Howse."

"WHY don't your men put on a better show?" I asked the young captain of the French landing-craft. "Can't you see how the Americans disapprove of their behaviour?" He gave me a sour smile. "That's just it," he explained to me. "How would you feel if one stared at you constantly with that air of moral superiority? The longer we have to take this demonstratively righteous attitude of the Americans, the less we like it. It turns my men more bitter all the time. You have to look at it

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this way: my men have served in mixed units with the Vietnamese, and they have had to put up with all the treacheries of their native comrades. You can't blame them if they don't like these people. We know them better than the Americans do. It does not pay to be nice to them. If you give them your little finger, they take the whole hand. They take advantage of you whenever you give them a chance."

But this, in fact, was not the immediate worry of the Americans. The first thing the refugees saw dangling over their heads when they entered the ship was a toilet bowl, fastened upon a board, and under it in big letters a list of instructions for its use. When the first ships had started on their rescue mission, they had been covered with excrement within the first hour, and this was to be avoided now. Loudspeakers bellowed in Vietnamese a greeting: "Use the toilets at the stern of the ship. They are not for washing your faces or laundry. We have washbasins for that. And please do not stand with your feet on the toilet bowls." These orders proved a complete success. Indeed, the simple rice farmers of the north turned out to be a nicer lot of travelling companions than the Vietnamese officials and notables who had been delegated by the government to accompany them and who enjoyed the privileges of officers' cabins and food. These gentlemen had already infuriated the Americans during the embarkation when they stood at the railing and stared down with evident contempt upon their struggling countrymen, unmoved and unwilling to lift a finger on their behalf. If the Americans enjoyed dirtying themselves by touching these pariahs—that was their business. They themselves did not stoop any lower than to the microphone, in order to deliver a few admonishing words in Vietnamese.

However, this was not all. Theoretically, the Vietnamese "control commission" was to consist of an officer, an interpreter, a doctor, a nurse, and a midwife. But during the first meal in the officers' mess no less than twenty-five persons appeared. They were "friends" of the officials and among them was a family of fifteen who simply sat down at the table, confident that American generosity would take care of them. Yet what surprised me most were my neighbours in the adjoining cabin: two girls in vividly coloured dresses whom the French lieutenant identified immediately as two old "friends" from the bordello in Nam Dinh. Since the Viet Minh was known to give short shrift to prostitutes by beheading them, they too enjoyed the hospitality of the evacuation fleet. With some pull, our two young ladies had managed to settle under the wings of the Vietnamese "control commission." This was a little too much even for the chief of this mission, a Vietnamese lieutenant. On the following morning—to preserve the honour of Viet Nam—they were expelled from their cosy nest, and since they obviously resented the cold contempt of the simple peasants who occupied the regular quarters, they arranged themselves in the fresh air on the open deck.

YET even there they were better off than the majority of the refugees in the hold of the ship. When, in the evening, I accompanied the American and the Vietnamese doctors into the crew's quarters below deck, an overwhelming stench hit us and it took all our will-power to descend any further. It was the odour of the oriental masses, a mixture of sweat, rotting garments, children's urine, and many other smells. The place was littered with children. Indeed, half of the refugees were children. They crawled in every corner, they were nursing at their mothers' breasts, they clung to the backs of their little brothers and sisters. Immediately we were surrounded by people begging for help. All of them entreated us with the same gesture: they pulled down the lower lids of their eyes and showed us the inflamed, reddish insides. In no time the tubes of aureomycin in the doctors' hands were empty. Generously they spread salve upon the pus-filled boils on the ugly heads of countless children. Many of the diseases, I was told, can be attributed to the filth in which these people live; others are caused by the monotonous diet of rice and codfish. Even on ship they stuffed their bursting bellies with mountainous quantities of rice and cod, and scornfully pushed aside the cabbage that American cooking tried to make palatable to them.

Practically every refugee transport had its birth and its death. Our most likely candidate for death was an eight-year-old boy, Chu Van Hoc, who, at midnight on our first day aboard, lay stretched out on the operating table with half-closed, glazed eyes. All of his ribs were plainly visible under the skin of his weak, rapidly-breathing chest. His emaciated, dirt-encrusted arms hung down numbly, and

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only his stomach formed a round, shining ball into which the doctor sank his instruments, extracting enormous quantities of water. This saved little Chu for the time being, but in the long run there was no hope for him.

I visited him the next day in the ship's hospital. All day long his mother lay stretched out across his bed and watched his every move. She had had nine children, and Chu was the only one still alive. She and her husband had always been poor, the children always diseased. During the war, French barbed-wire fences had been strung across their rice-paddy, and artillery shells had destroyed their house. She related these incidents without sentimentality, staring blindly past her only remaining child.

Next to Chu rested another bundle of misery. Ho Ngoc Canh was thirty-three years old and came from Phat-Diem, a village which had fallen into Communist hands during the last months of the war, when the French retreated into the south-east corner of the delta. Ho had always been a devout Catholic—although, ironically enough, he belonged to the same family as Ho Chi Minh—and he had chosen the priesthood for his vocation. At the seminary, he had contracted a vicious disease, spermatorrhea, and become partially paralysed and completely bed-ridden. Nevertheless, after his father's death, according to Vietnamese tradition, he, as the eldest son, had become the head of the family, in spite of his physical handicap; and with his sister he had administered the two *mao* (about 1¾ acres) of rice-paddies he had inherited. His two younger brothers had joined the Vietnamese Army. When the Communists came, they confiscated his land and distributed it among the other peasants. He was not allowed to slaughter his pig or kill any of his chickens. With only a small bundle of clothes and kitchen utensils, the family found itself in the street. They had a choice of carrying the invalid brother or spending their last money on a rented vehicle. In the end, after his pregnant sister collapsed on the road and delivered a stillborn baby which they buried on the spot, they did both. Now, this man was resting in the hospital bed, his hands on his chest and his thin fingers devoutly clasping a large wooden crucifix. Exile for him would not be quite so bad as for many of the others. His two brothers in the south were now obliged to take care of the family, and there was always the helping hand of the church.

CHRISTIANITY was represented on the "General R. L. Howse" in a most conspicuous way. Our neighbours opposite the prostitutes were a group of Catholic Vietnamese priests, of various ages and with assorted goatees. Whenever the American priest aboard joined his colleagues, learned discussions resounded through the partitions—the language barrier being bridged with the aid of the ecclesiastical *lingua franca*: Latin. On each afternoon of the two days it took us to travel from Haiphong to Saigon, a large number of people assembled on deck for mass, clutching their rosaries. Among the priests, the oldest and most fascinating person was Père Khoa, from Dong Quang, a village some 150 kilometres west of Hanoi. He had had plenty of experience with the Communists because his village had been in their territory since 1945. Nothing had happened to him for nine years. The Communists ignored him completely. Indeed, they ignored him so vigorously that the people of the village also were forced to avoid him. Nobody stopped him from reading mass—but he read it in an empty church. Only occasionally did a parishioner have enough courage to sneak into his house for confession or to drop off a gift. When he walked down the street, all faces turned the other way. It was as though some magic device had made him invisible. The young people no longer heard the Christian message, and an expression of indignant shock spread over the old man's face when he told me that the Communists had encouraged dancing among the village youth. Before their time, it had been unheard of that young boys and girls would even dare to walk down the street together, not to mention embracing each other sinfully on a dance-hall floor. Until last May, the priest had lived in this vacuum. In great privation he had survived all those years, finding a meagre living as village tailor and by labouring in the rice-paddies. In May, however, he had been arrested. For a whole day he was forced to kneel down in the middle of the road, his face turned towards the glaring sun; later, bamboo sticks were driven into his ears. In September 1954 he managed to escape. But even today he was filled with terror, and the name he gave me was a pseudonym.

Most of the non-Catholics who had left the North and with whom I talked were either wealthy or had to fear Viet Minh retaliation on account of their war services with

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the French. Take, for instance, Pham Chac Khanh, from Dai Nanh, some ninety kilometres south of Hanoi. His theatrical gestures and the European cut of his clothes had immediately attracted my attention. From 1939 until 1948 he had served in a mixed unit of the French Army and had risen to the rank of sergeant with the French forces that occupied Germany. He had returned to his native village in North Viet Nam with a tidy sum of money saved and bought ten *mao* of rice-paddies and several houses. A military capitalist like that could expect no mercy from the Viet Minh. They had applied to him the same technique they used to rid themselves of many other "undesirable" elements. They simply asked him to pay up the taxes he "owed" them back to 1945, the year they had set up a provisional government in Hanoi. To get the money for such a large sum he would have had to sell some of his houses or his land. But the Communists would not allow him to sell; so he had to leave.

Hardly any of the practically illiterate peasants comprehended or rejected Communism as a political phenomenon. For this one would have needed the intellectual polish of a man like Le Quang Khanh, who travelled exclusively in the higher realms of the "control commission," although he was in no way connected with it. Throughout the trip his trousers never lost their razor-sharp edge and wherever there was something to be criticised or sneered at, one would invariably hear his Parisian French and feel the stare of his arrogant eyes. Actually, Le Quang had no reason to turn his back on the Viet Minh's new People's Republic. His father, a professor in Hanoi, had been dismissed by the French as a nationalist agitator as early as 1927. Both of his brothers had joined the Viet Minh army and his two married sisters in Hanoi had chosen to remain there. He was the only member of the family who had declared himself for the "other side," and even that only with qualifications. For Le Quang hated the French just as much as he hated his brothers, or even more. His resentment was without limits. Even in the smallest, inevitable snags of the evacuation he smelled satanic intrigue. And he did not belong in South Viet Nam either, since he condemned that government as a pack of French lackies. Essentially he was an anarchist, unwilling and unable to take his place anywhere. His father had let him study pharmacy. But he had refused to exercise his profession because he felt himself hemmed in by the discipline it entailed. He had chosen the freedom of a bookseller and opened a shop for scientific literature in Hanoi, which he had now turned over to his sister. Perhaps if South Viet Nam would establish a truly independent government, he confessed, he might make up his mind and even partake actively in the fight against the Communists, but for the time being his answer was no. I could not help smiling. This man with creased trousers and disdain for ordinary people would never fight for anything. He was a typical specimen of that brand of intellectual unwilling to make sacrifices and to provide South Viet Nam with a dedicated leadership. His anti-Communism was little more than egotism.

YET there was also a more wholesome type of intellectual among these refugees. I met Chu Sa Tri first when he came to fetch some medical aid for a friend suffering a malaria attack. Chu, who spoke French and Chinese fluently, came from the province of Haininh, close to the Chinese border. Although he was only thirty-four years old, he had already had a strange and chequered career. Educated in a French administrative school, he had worked as a travelling salesman under the Japanese occupation and, I suspected, as an intelligence agent, too. When the Viet Minh established their régime for the first time in 1945, he went underground as a coolie. Afterward, he joined the service of the French once more, as a *chef de région*. But in 1952 he gave up the job. "I do not hate the French," he told me, "but I did not want to work for them any more, either." This educated man then became a simple rice-farmer again—but once more with a specific purpose in mind. "Take a look at our 'control commission,'" he said to me. "They despise the people. The refugees here complain about their inefficiency. I myself will file a protest with the government in Saigon. If we really want to fight Communism, we must bridge this gulf. I became a farmer because I wanted to establish contact with the ordinary people."

"Are there other young people who think like you do?" I asked him.

"Come to Tai Ninh," he replied. "There at the headquarters of the Caodaists, you will find other people who share my views."

On the morning of the second day my

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travelling companion, the French lieutenant, had his finest hour. It was the custom of the U.S. Navy to hand a farewell present to its protégés. Not only were the refugees allowed to keep the chopsticks and the little bowls in which they had received their rice, but each woman was also given two pounds of rice, each man two packages of cigarettes, and each child a bag of candy. In addition to this, every person was issued a large piece of soap. If these goods had been entrusted to Vietnamese personnel for distribution, surely half of them would have vanished and reappeared a while later on the black market. Therefore, the American crew had taken charge of the handouts. The refugees assembled on deck, moved down a gangway, and each one of them was handed his gift individually. At the same time they were "branded" with a spot of indelible ink on a hand, and the American chaplain personally presented a neatly printed note to each individual which expressed the congratulations of the U.S. Navy.

The note and the soap were quickly used to remove the supposedly indelible spot from the refugees' hands and most of them quietly returned and mingled with the waiting crowd which had not yet received their gifts. With the same innocent, lazy, and motionless faces they displayed all day long when they dozed on deck like ageing crocodiles, they passed by the furiously spending Americans for the second, the third, the fourth time without even bothering to empty their pockets of the loot of their previous forays. Only when the number of the distributed gifts turned out to be a few times larger than the total number of refugees on board did the crew realise what had happened. Good-naturedly, they shrugged their shoulders.

Meanwhile, Lacroix was shaking with laughter. "Now you see how far kindness gets you with these people? They are always ready to take advantage of you. They don't know gratitude. They are so used to being exploited that they seize upon any opportunity which allows them to exploit someone else for a change. And don't think they appreciate the American generosity which lets them get away with their hoax. They will just go around and boast how they cheated the foreigners."

On September 24th the "General R. L. Howse" dropped anchor at Cape St. Jacques, and our refugees began their descent to the reception camp which, with its capacity of 25,000, was one of the largest outside the Saigon area.

At the same hour the hundred-thousandth refugee transported by the U.S. Navy disembarked from the U.S.S. "Estes" in a solemn ceremony at the quay in Saigon, where Ngo Dinh Diem, the premier of South Viet Nam, awaited him. The French were furious at this American "publicity stunt." Their planes and vessels had evacuated some 300,000 refugees in the same period and nobody had paid any attention to them! So the South Viet Nam government hastily decided to celebrate the next French jubilee—but the festive air of that occasion was slightly spoiled by the discordant noises from the camps near Saigon where thousands of refugees, spurred on by Viet Minh agents, demanded their return to the North.

It is, indeed, quite discouraging for the free world to note that South Viet Nam has been flooded by a campaign of defeatism and defamation which spreads far beyond the circles of Communist sympathisers. The American aid money, goes this whispering campaign, instead of helping the refugees, ends up in the pockets of greedy ministers. The poor people, it is said, have to live in tent cities, forgotten and without funds, and their resettlement is not making any progress at all. In August, these insidious rumours may have been based on some actual experience. At that time, the organisational incompetence of the South Viet Nam government was indeed responsible for some deplorable conditions. But on August 28th, 1954, a Refugee Commission with the rank of a Ministry was created. Under the direction of a number of selfless, idealistic men, who cooperated closely with the American Military Advisory Group (AMAG), the Special Technical and Economic Mission (STEM), the U.S. Embassy, and the United States Information Service (USIS), this commission has done some very un-oriental, efficient work. Within a month, they placed 70,000 refugees in new homes. Their resettlement programme also proceeded with remarkable speed. After all, to resettle these people simply meant to provide them with an acre of rice-land, enough steppe-grass to build a new hut in a day or two, a few farm animals, tools, and a well.

"Many of them," I was told by the Commissioner General for Refugees in Saigon,

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Ngo-ngoc Doi, a former professor of mathematics and director of the bureau of standards, "are much better off here materially than they ever were in their native country where seven million people were squeezed into some fifteen thousand square miles of tillable land. Besides, all adults receive twelve piastres a day for three months after they have landed, and each child gets six piastres a day. A family with four children thus earns more money per day than any of the people who lived here already and who work a full day for about thirty piastres."

The resettlement of the North Vietnamese has been greatly simplified by the fact that only in rare instances has there been any problem of adjustment to, or integration with, the native population. South Viet Nam possesses vast forest areas where new grounds for settlement may be broken easily without endangering the ecology of the country, and large stretches of fertile ground are fallow because their owners were killed during the war.

Shortly after my arrival in Saigon, Nguyen Thanh Dieu, the head of the resettlement section of the Refugee Commission, drove me out to the province of Bien Hoa, some thirty-five kilometres north-east of Saigon, which so far has absorbed some fifty thousand refugees. From Bien Hoa, the capital of this province with the same name, a road leads through the jungle to Balat, the king's summer residence. During the war the French had cleared a large strip on either side of this road to protect themselves against ambushes. This no-man's-land today is an ideal area for the settlement of South Viet Nam's new citizens. For most of our drive we saw the same thing on either side of the road: peasants balancing huge loads of grass on their carrying-poles, young men cutting and cropping long, heavy sticks of bamboo, and building shelters and sleeping-places for their families. New settlements rise practically overnight. Gia Kiem, Nguyen explained to me, was a particularly suitable section for settlement because the climate permitted the growing of vegetables which could be sold at the nearby market in Saigon. "Come back in a year," he said, "and you will find a prospering village in this place. You won't believe it, but at first nobody wanted this marvellous spot. It was too far away from the nearest large city, and our refugees are extremely choosy. In Thu Dau Mot, the adjoining province, there is enough land for 4,000 refugees. And in Tai Ninh the Caodaists have built 10,000 houses for them. But nobody wants any part of them. If you investigate further, it usually turns out that the priest is behind all this resistance. These people will do nothing, absolutely nothing, unless their priest gives them the signal. Listen to what happened recently at camp St. Jacques. A group of refugees had just arrived when a cloudburst suddenly came down upon them. Fatalistically they sat down in front of their tents and naturally got soaked to their skins. When we asked them why they had not sought shelter inside the tents they amazed us by telling us that the priest had not yet told them to do so. Thus, if the priest is an egotist who thinks only about his personal welfare and income, you will find these people sullen and lazy. Or vice versa."

Indeed, the fine spirit of Gia Kiem was largely due to the work of Abbé Jean Baptiste and five other, younger priests from the province of Phat Diem, who radiated enthusiasm and intelligence. They had managed to preserve intact the social structure of their village in the transfer. Only the wealthy notables had refused to come with them, since most of them had found shelter with relatives in Saigon. But this absence of civilian authority had only strengthened the bonds between the priests and their flock. Because they proved worthy of their task, conditions at Gia Kiem were far more encouraging than in other places. Jean Baptiste was not afraid to take off his soutane after the morning service and reach for a shovel. Yet every night he was once more the priest, the father who administered communion to his flock. "If we only had many more such priests," sighed Nguyen as we drove back to Saigon.

Peter Schmid

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Letter from America

The Anatomy of American Conservatism

ONE of the wonders of the postwar decade in America has been the revival of conservatism in politics and culture. If hardly as startling in immediate impact as the triumph of television, the development of the H-bomb, or the outlawing of segregation in education, the reappearance of conservatism may yet be judged an equally momentous event in the history of the Republic.

The signs of this conservatism are everywhere. After generations of exile from respectability, the word itself has been welcomed home with cheers by men who, a few short years ago, would sooner have been called arsonists than conservatives. Politicians, columnists, businessmen, and editors shout the slogans of the great revival; the campuses run over with poets and professors who yield to no one, not even to the editors of *Life* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, in their insistence that "what America needs is a healthy dose of true conservatism." Radicalism is out of fashion and liberalism out of office, and there is more talk of the American heritage than of the American future. Even the liberal, the man with his heart in this future, speaks the language of tradition, loyalty, and preservation.

THIS letter is an attempt at an anatomy of modern American conservatism. Specifically, it is my delayed answer to questions that were put to me repeatedly last year in Great Britain and on the Continent: Who are the American Conservatives and what do they think? Is this resurgent American conservatism all of a piece, or is it, like American liberalism, marked by diversity?

I begin my tentative answer to these hard questions with a review of those men and groups who constitute the active Right in American politics. Although this may seem to many of my countrymen a rather high-handed undertaking, I am confident that men who make constant use of the words "Left" and "Leftist" will not themselves object to being described, quite without malice, as occupants of the Right. I am convinced that there exists a useful rule of thumb with which to identify those who belong on the American Right. Like any rule of thumb, its accuracy is something less than 100 per cent.

The contemporary Right, in my opinion, includes those who now admit to distaste for the dominant political theory and practice of the twenty years between Hoover and Eisenhower—for New Deal and Fair Deal, Roosevelt and Truman, service state and welfare state, reform at home and adventure abroad. Having waded hip-deep through the political literature of the past ten years, I would assert without hesitation that the conservatism of the American Right is essentially a posture of anti-radicalism or anti-liberalism—a many-sided yet integral reaction to the New Deal, its leader, and his political heirs. The decisive factor in the shaping of modern American conservatism was Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The continuing hostility to Mr. Roosevelt and his works ranges from gnawing, unforgiving hatred to the tolerant suspicion that, while much of what he did was probably necessary to do, he did all things rather sloppily and some things he had no business doing at all. I would suggest that there is today, in Congress and among the people, an "anti-Roosevelt coalition," and that it may be labelled for what it is: the American Right. I would add quickly that, thanks to the traditionalism

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and professionalism of much of our party politics, several million members of the anti-Roosevelt coalition would still be voting for Mr. Roosevelt were he alive and running!

The attempt to be taxonomic about the political attitudes of half—or is it rather two-thirds?—of a nation is a dangerous undertaking. The reader is therefore begged to remember that the line between any two of the categories that follow is not a line but an imperceptible gradation, and that there are any number of variations within each category. He should remember, too, that I am classifying men, not gall wasps. Some Americans—the pure opportunists, for example—have no principles and therefore defy this sort of classification. Others have opinions so loose and ill-conceived that they seem to fit with equal ease into any one of three or four slots. Still others are more conservative or liberal about some special concern like religion or civil rights than they are in their general outlook, and they, too, are hard to pin down. Having issued this warning, I suggest these rough and empirical categories, which proceed from the right extremity toward the centre of the American political spectrum.

AMERICA, too, has its authoritarians of the Right, its citizens who are not merely careless critics but confessed enemies of constitutional democracy. Whether they should be classed as fascists is as much a problem in semantics as in political science, especially since most of them are as quick with the slogans of liberalism as any orator at a national convention. They declare their allegiance to the whole American creed and rarely permit themselves to think consciously along authoritarian lines. There is a good deal of wisdom in Robert A. Brady's comment: "It is practically certain that if a *coup d'état* ever comes in America from the right it will be advertised as a defence of democratic freedoms and a blow at fascism." It is equally certain that most of those implicated in the *coup* will believe what they say. In any case, it is safe to say that precious few Americans are now adherents of fascism in any precise sense of this word, which must, like Communism, be used with precision.

This group merges into that noisy minority best described as "the lunatic Right." One approaches the likes of Gerald L. K. Smith with mingled feelings of revulsion and bewilderment, wondering how men who were raised on American soil could have made a philosophy out of hate and a way of life out of prejudice. Since it is not to my purpose even to suggest an answer to this question, I observe only that these "professional haters" do exist, that they have made Mr. Roosevelt the Satan of their theology, that they act like fascists but talk like liberals, and that they have done more than their share to create the present moral and emotional climate in America.

A third handful of men are taking special delight in another aspect of the present climate: nostalgia. These are the pure traditionalists, the sentimental reactionaries, the men who are sick with what one critic has called "political necrophilia." They long in vain for the days of Webster and Washington and indulge with emotion in ritualistic remembrance of things past. Most of them live in a state of acute cultural schizophrenia: they enjoy the fruits of the twentieth century but are shocked by the orchards that have brought them forth. The incidence of pure traditionalists among the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution is especially high.

Although most inhabitants of the contemporary Right are committed to the general philosophy of individualism, only a few are willing to drive this doctrine straight through to its logical conclusion: philosophical anarchy. The father of this hardy band was Albert Jay Nock, whose *Our Enemy, the State* (1935) and *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man* (1943) preached a gospel of laisser-faire that was *really* laisser-faire. The best known contemporary exponents of pure individualism are John Chamberlain, who likes to write introductions to ultra-conservative tracts; Ayn Rand, whose novel *The Fountainhead* (1943) is a great favourite among young men who seek to soar on pinions free; and Frank Chodorov, whose *One is a Crowd* (1952) is a near-anarchistic tract against the "iniquity" of the income tax and "fraud" of social security.

To linger over these groups would be a fascinating but misleading exercise, for, taken altogether, they cannot number much more than two or three per cent of the American people. I would add only this comment: they are not really conservatives at all, but either reactionaries shot full of radicalism, reactionaries pure and simple, or opportunists in an age and country where anti-radicalism seems to offer the best opportunities.

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Most men on the contemporary Right may be placed in one of three major categories, each of which counts its occupants in millions:

(1) The late Senator Wherry of Nebraska liked to describe himself as a "fundamentalist," and were this word not used generally to identify certain Protestant sects, it might well serve as the most accurate one-word description of the ultra-conservatives, those several millions of Americans whose political outlook is an extraordinary mixture of sober conservatism, timid standpattism, and angry reaction—a mixture rendered even more extraordinary by a careless penchant for radical methods. These people are represented in the Senate by John Bricker of Ohio and George Malone of Nevada, in the daily press by the *Chicago Tribune* and the Hearst papers, among periodicals by *The Freeman* and the *American Mercury*, and on the radio by George Sokolsky and Fulton Lewis, Jr. John T. Flynn is their Milton, oilman H. L. Hunt of Texas their Maecenas, Dean Acheson and Governor Thomas E. Dewey their hated Lucifers, Senator McCarthy their slightly tarnished Galahad, Douglas MacArthur the man they wish were President of the United States. At one extreme, the ultra-conservatives merge effortlessly into the great middle group of conservatives. At the other, they are so harsh and malevolent as to be fellow-travellers of fascism. It is this group of conservatives, a small but ear-splitting fraction of the American people, who have been providing "the dynamic of dissent" in America in the last couple of years. Their brand of dissent, Richard Hofstadter has remarked, "is not as powerful as the liberal dissent of the New Deal era, but it is powerful enough to set the tone of our political life. . . . It can most accurately be called pseudo-conservative . . . because its exponents, although they believe themselves to be conservatives and usually employ the rhetoric of conservatism, show signs of a serious and restless dissatisfaction with American life, traditions, and institutions."

(2) The largest of these categories contains the middling conservatives. Although some of them are slightly infected with sentimental reaction, the millions of self-styled "middle-of-the roaders" come closer to genuine conservatism than any group in contemporary America. Former President Hoover and Senator Millikin of Colorado are located somewhere near one boundary of this category, President Eisenhower and Bernard Baruch somewhere near the other. In the centre stood—and for our purposes still stands—the very model of the American conservative, the late Senator Taft. Oddly enough, considering the numbers, conviction, and wealth of the conservative Americans, there are few newspapers, magazines, commentators, or books that do their cause justice. Although their sentiments may be sampled in the editorials of the *Saturday Evening Post*, they have very little to say on their own behalf. They seem equally willing to nod assent to the harsh strictures of those to their right and to the more temperate judgements of those to their immediate left. Lacking a battery of columnists who express their middle-of-the-road opinions, sufficiently angry at the New Deal to take delight in hearing it smote hip and thigh, hardly knowing their own moderate minds, they are as likely to applaud John T. Flynn as Walter Lippmann, as willing to be instructed by Sokolsky of the Hearst papers as by John K. Jessup of *Life*.

(3) The last species of citizen on the contemporary Right finds his natural habitat on the Atlantic seaboard and in the left wing of the Republican party, although he may also be found scattered throughout the country and the Democratic ranks. It is hard to say exactly what sets off liberal conservatives from middling conservatives, but certainly their actions and ideas seem more flexible, thoughtful, and charitable than those of other men on the Right. They are less inclined to weep tears over the last two decades, more inclined to recognise professors and union leaders as useful fellow citizens. In Walter Lippmann and August Heckscher of the *New York Herald Tribune* they are blessed with able publicists; in Sumner Slichter of Harvard and David McCord of Virginia, with equally able economists; in Chief Justice Earl Warren, Senator Ralph Flanders of Vermont, Senator Clifford Case of New Jersey, John McCloy, Lewis W. Douglas, Paul Hoffman, Charles P. Taft of Ohio, and Thomas E. Dewey, with impressive public figures; in the great foundations, with powerful instruments for constructive conservatism; in the Committee for Economic Development, with an educational agency quite unique in objectivity; in *Fortune*,

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the *New York Times*, and the *New York Herald Tribune*, with organs that hold the respect of most of the nation; and in Charles Evans Hughes and Henry L. Stimson, with two demi-gods of upright conservatism. Liberal conservatives are not uniformly loved for their attempts to strike a balance between stability and progress. To ultra-conservatives they appear as "just another bunch of New Dealers," to hard-bitten liberals as "Wall Streeters with brains."

With the exception of a few professors and publicists, who are looked upon with suspicion for their pains, the men on the American Right are not given to hard thinking about man, society, and government. Many times I have asked an able, articulate man of affairs to state his opinions on liberty or equality or natural law, and have been turned aside by a slogan, a truism, or a frank confession of ignorance or indifference. Senator Taft himself, when pressed for a statement of his philosophy, is said to have replied: "There are some questions that I haven't thought very much about." The principles of American conservatism are not thoughts or reflections or hypotheses; they are assumptions, prejudices, myths, vague longings, and slogans—above all, slogans. Modern American conservatism has no Burke or John Adams; I have heard its critics argue cogently that it has no philosophy. I say all this as a truth I have come to reluctantly, not as a libel that I was anxious to prove from the start.

For this reason, I forbear to state the principles of modern American conservatism. I will, however, say this: The key intellectual fact about the American Right is that it is conservative without being Conservative. It seeks with all its powers to defend and preserve an established way of life, but it does this with the aid of ideas and slogans that are calculated to disturb rather than to stabilise the social order, to accelerate rather than to retard the social process. The American Right remains today, as it has been for more than one hundred years, the willing prisoner of the American tradition, of the Liberalisms of Monticello and Manchester; and it rejects angrily the suggestion of well meaning intellectuals that it embrace the Conservative principles of Burke, Coleridge, and Disraeli, or even of John Adams, John C. Calhoun, and Elihu Root. Its intellectual forebears, whom it interprets to suit itself, are Thomas Jefferson and Herbert Spencer, and its principles can only be described, paradoxically, as "laisser-faire conservatism."

If its present faith is somewhat less laisser-faire than that proclaimed by Andrew Carnegie, it has nevertheless changed surprisingly little in this changing world. While the position of men like Taft, Hoover, and Eisenhower on the American political spectrum may certainly be labelled "conservative," they defend this position with the bright words of liberalism. Mr. Hoover is not to be laughed at for his dogged insistence that he is a "true Liberal," nor President Eisenhower for proclaiming himself "basically a progressive." Liberalism and progressivism are built into the tradition these eminent men are bent on conserving, and in this country, too, a man may still call himself what he wishes. In any case, despite misgivings and confusions, despite all that has happened in this century, the average American conservative continues to assume human perfectibility, cherish progress, proclaim liberty, put his faith in democracy, preach equality, and reduce all problems to terms of the individual and his rights. He is, like his father and grandfather, too much of an individualist, an optimist, and a materialist, too indifferent to the ironies and tragedies of history, too confident of his ability to make the world over, ever to be classed as a Conservative. In short, while the American Right is conservative in mood and practice and purpose, it remains liberal in ideal and oratory. Small wonder that the art of public debate is at a low level in contemporary America. The conservatives talk like liberals, the liberals like conservatives. If anyone doubts this, let him read over the major campaign speeches of Eisenhower and Stevenson.

Although any American conservative may stray off the reservation on an issue like China or free trade or civil rights, it is possible, I am convinced, to predict specific attitudes on current issues in four cases out of five. In the area of foreign policy, most ultra-conservatives are ultra-nationalists, most conservatives are nationalists torn between conflicting desires, most liberal conservatives are nationalists with distinct internationalist leanings.

Thus: Ultra-conservatives are outspokenly hostile to the UN, would like to put an end to "squandering our treasure abroad," consider

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the Bricker Amendment (to cut down the President's power over treaties and executive agreements) "a matter of life and death for the Republic," and think the two McCarran Acts an excellent beginning toward purifying American politics and society. Conservatives are unhappy about the UN but think there is no choice but to stay in, would like to reduce foreign spending sharply, support the Bricker Amendment but are willing to see it diluted, and think the two McCarran Acts generally worthy protections of our way of life. Liberal conservatives support the UN with scarcely abated enthusiasm, are prepared to maintain a high level of foreign spending, consider the Bricker Amendment a "dangerous innovation," and would like to see the McCarran Acts softened if not repealed in the interests of international good will and American dignity.

In the area of domestic policy, ultra-conservatives not only oppose any further social legislation but call for the scrapping of many agencies and programmes, especially those that do them no specific service. Conservatives will discuss social legislation, if not make broad proposals; and though they are likely to react as angrily as ever at any mention of the New Deal, they seem willing to leave the New Deal agencies in operation on reduced budgets. Liberal conservatives make counter-proposals to the promises of the Left and accept the new dimensions in government with little rancour or regret. Some of them have been known to say a kind word for the "purposes" if not the "methods" of Mr. Roosevelt.

Thus: Ultra-conservatives are ready, at least by their own testimony, to dissolve TVA, reduce the scope and generosity of social security, ignore the problem of civil rights for Negroes, and fight any proposal to improve the nation's health as "socialised medicine." An astounding number of them are eager to repeal or delimit the Sixteenth (income-tax) Amendment and return, no matter what the cost, to the Gold Standard. Conservatives are willing to tolerate TVA while slashing its appropriations, leave social security untouched except for "more business-like methods of operation," consider gingerly —and only under immense political pressure —a toothless bill for improving civil rights, and let the dead dog of "socialised medicine" lie dead in the street. They, too, would like lower taxes and harder money but do not favour schemes to return our tax structure and monetary policy to the patterns of happier days. Liberal conservatives are prepared to defend TVA, expand the coverage of social security, enact civil rights legislation with at least a few teeth, and sponsor bills that encourage voluntary health insurance programmes or sustain the medical schools. Proposals to repeal or amend the Sixteenth Amendment and return to the Gold Standard they regard as irresponsible pipe dreams. Many of this third group feel closer to moderates of the Left than to ultra-conservatives of the Right. They have reason to deny that they are on the Right at all. The ultra-conservatives, who brand them scornfully as "me-tooers," are happy to hear them deny it.

A final word on the ultra-conservatives: Although most of them are unquestionably conservative in their urges and ends, they have now become so indignant over the trends of the past twenty years, so alarmed by reform at home and weary of adventure overseas, that they are fighting the good fight for preservation with methods that reek of radicalism. Their feeling for the conservative mission was never especially developed anyway, and they apparently do not realise the implications of their actions. However pure their motives and sound their purposes, they are dabbling dangerously in a form of radicalism in their mania for amending the Constitution, their reckless assaults on the Presidency, their wistful plans for a new party, their disregard for the American traditions of fair play and freedom of dissent, their enthusiastic support of the new demagoguery, and their cult of extreme individualism. Men who engage in this sort of political extremism can hardly be classed as genuine conservatives. Whatever else it is, McCarthyism is not conservatism.

MY ANATOMY of modern American conservatism is still not complete, for there lives among us a minority of intellectuals, few but steadily growing in members and influence, who speak in the fullness of the Conservative tradition. Three small groups of modern Americans appear to be genuine Conservatives: First, there are the Southern agrarians like Stark Young, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, and John Crowe Ransom, who seek to maintain "a Southern

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way of life against what may be called the American or prevailing way," and who do it with the aid of a political and social theory in which aristocracy, social harmony, community, property, religion, contentment, reverence, order, and tradition are warmly praised, and egalitarianism, industrial progress, majority rule, rugged individualism, and materialism are searchingly questioned or roundly damned. Second, there are the Catholic political theorists, not all of them priests, whose writings provide a philosophical basis for the social pronouncements of the American hierarchy. Finally, there are the self-styled Conservative intellectuals, almost all professors, who draw more openly on thinkers like Burke than on the American tradition. The men I am thinking of in particular are Peter Viereck of Mt. Holyoke, Russell Kirk formerly of Michigan State College, B. I. Bell and Richard Weaver of Chicago, Francis G. Wilson of Illinois, R. A. Nisbet of California, John Hallowell of Duke, and Thomas I. Cook of Johns Hopkins. Several of their central ideas are also heard from men as distinguished and dissimilar as Herbert Agar, Harry Gideonse, George Kennan, Robert M. Hutchins, Walter Lippmann, Peter Drucker, Mortimer Adler, and Reinhold Niebuhr. There are, to be sure, variations in mood and inspiration among the Conservative intellectuals, but the differences that divide, say, the Tory Conservatism of Kirk from the Catholic Conservatism of Ross Hoffman (of Fordham) or the Aristotelian Conservatism of Hallowell from the Burkean Conservatism of Viereck are shallow ditches compared with the deep gulf that divides them all from the laisser-faire conservatism of a Hoover or Bricker. If there is any line to be drawn down the middle of the intellectual Conservatives, it is between those who are most concerned at present about the pseudo-conservatism of the extreme Right and those who persist in crying havoc at the purposeful progressivism of the Left.

What separates all these men clearly from most American conservatives is an outspoken distaste for the excesses, vulgarities, and dislocations of the industrial way of life; a deep-seated antipathy toward the undiluted Jeffersonian tradition; a consequent emphasis on our European and English heritage; a peculiar affection for Burke; and a willingness to think and write in the spirit of conscious Conservatism. Indeed, men like Kirk and Viereck yield to no one in England or Europe in their devotion to the full Conservative tradition. The constant themes in their writings are: the universal moral order supported and sanctioned by organised religion; the imperfect nature of man; the conservative mission of education; the inseparability of liberty and property; the excellence of aristocracy, or at least of the aristocratic spirit; the limited reach of reason and the consequent importance of traditions and institutions; the necessity of diffusing power; the equilibrium of rights and responsibilities; the primacy of the community; the beauties of stability and order; the final dignity and inviolability of the human personality; the pleasures of the Conservative mood; the superiority of the Conservative mind; and the gravity of the Conservative mission. These men are not irresponsible critics of the American way of life, nor can more than one or two of them be classed as sentimental reactionaries. They love America with that special intensity with which one loves the wayward parent and are full of well-meaning advice about methods for our achieving social and cultural maturity.

In the final reckoning, agrarian, Catholic, and intellectual Conservatives are together distinguished from other conservatives by their obstinate refusal to delight in the "progress" of industrialism or to make peace with the "shallow optimism," "selfish individualism," and "hedonistic materialism" of the scheme of values this progress has sustained. Their ideas are a constant goad to the conscience of the Right, a bench mark against which to measure its deviations from Conservatism, and a reminder that some conservative Americans are as troubled by the harsh dogmas of individualism as by the false promises of collectivism.

THIS brief account of the ideals and anxieties of the American Conservatives goes far towards explaining a startling fact: a majority of this minority lines up in "the Roosevelt coalition" in opposition to the great body of conservatives. In the grand showdown of 1952, most of these men voted the way they had voted for years—for the party and at least some of the principles of Franklin D. Roosevelt—and thereby dramatised one of the persistent problems of American life: the flight of sensitive intellectuals away from the active Right.

I have heard many reasons advanced to

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explain the breach between conservatism and Conservatism. Some Conservatives are convinced that, from the long view of history, the attitude towards government of the New and Fair Deals is actually more Conservative than the simple anti-statism of the old guard. In addition, they accuse ultra-conservatives of holding "radical" views about many institutions and arrangements—for example, trade unions and maternity benefits and public power developments—that are now integral parts of the American way of life. Other Conservatives will not accept the businessman as the key figure of American civilisation. Still others confess that they took the anti-intellectualism of the Eisenhower campaign at face value. Then, there is "the old school tie": the Conservative intellectual is more at ease with liberal or even radical members of his own profession than with conservatives of another.

There are special reasons, too. Southern agrarians and Catholic Conservatives are likely to be Democrats by inheritance, and they continue to prove by word and vote that in their father's house are many mansions. Agrarians are gratefully aware of what the New Deal did for Southern agriculture. Catholic philosophers agree with old-guard Republicans that economic individualism took a beating in "the twenty long years"—but are pleased rather than distressed. I have heard more than one Catholic Conservative express the thought that the New Deal, whatever its excesses, re-established the sense of community and rekindled the fires of social justice. And I have heard Conservatives of all kinds express profound mistrust of the capacity of the Republican party to prosecute a sound foreign policy based on cooperation with other nations.

The chief reason, of course, for this rift between Conservatism and conservatism is the historic anti-intellectualism of American conservatives, an attitude of mistrust and contempt that goes far beyond the quizzical suspicion most conservatives seem to have for men whose business is thinking rather than doing. The American conservative has not merely distrusted the poet, professor, philosopher, and political theorist; he has scorned them, bullied them, and not seldom despised them. As man of action, in hot pursuit of present profit, he has been too heavily engaged to read or reflect, and thus looks with misgiving on those who do. As man of status and substance, generally satisfied with things as they are, he is easily disturbed by those who criticise his actions, challenge his position, and propose changes in the rules of a game in which he has been a heavy winner. He and the intellectual are trapped in a vicious circle: the more savagely one of them baits, the more savagely he is baited. In the end, the conservative is left with only a handful of faithful friends in the ranks of intellectuals, for his materialism and primitivism alienate natural allies as well as natural foes.

The Conservatives, with few exceptions, are far from comfortable in "the Roosevelt coalition," but there they will remain, usually as voters rather than active workers, until the leopard of conservatism changes a few of his spots. This—the alienation of the conservatives from Conservatism—is a distressing truth of American intellectual history. Until the Conservative in the tower can be persuaded to think for his brother in the market place, and until the latter can be persuaded to accept his advice or at least respect his judgement, there will be no improvement in the confused state of conservative thought and unsure pace of conservative action. The full weight of American conservatism—certainly of its middle and liberal groups—is too badly needed in the fight for democratic freedom to permit this sad breach to remain unclosed. How it is to be closed is the one problem to which no American Conservative has yet presented a convincing solution. Is it possible that it cannot be? I end this answer to the questions of my British and continental friends with a question far more difficult and fateful.

Clinton Rossiter

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Men and Ideas

Marjorie Grene: DAVID HUME

SOME time in the years 1735–37 a young Scotsman was strolling in the Jesuit Seminary of La Flèche when there came into his mind an argument about the relation of testimony to miracles. Many years later, when he had made the same argument notorious, he described the scene:

> I was walking in the cloisters of the Jesuits' College of La Flèche, a town in which I passed two years of my youth, and engaged in a conversation with a Jesuit of some parts and learning, who was relating to me, and urging some nonsensical miracle performed in their convent, when I was tempted to dispute against him; and as my head was full of the topics of my *Treatise of Human Nature*, which I was at that time composing, this argument immediately occurred to me, and I thought it very much gravelled my companion; but at last he observed to me, that it was impossible for that argument to have any solidity, because it operated equally against the Gospel as the Catholic miracles;—which observation I thought proper to admit as a sufficient answer.

The resistance of the Jesuit priest to Hume's way of reasoning was not an isolated instance. The *Treatise* itself fell "deadborn from the Press," yet it has turned out to be the most influential—or perhaps one should say the most fundamental—philosophical document in English, for it stated definitely the plain, commonsensical view of the human mind which seemed, and still seems, to be sponsored by the authority of science. It is a conditioned-reflex sort of mind in which associative mechanisms generate roughly satisfactory habits of belief. These habits have no logical guarantee—everything that holds together might fall apart—but they work out well enough since they have the sanctity of being grounded in sensation. Separable sense impressions, their imagined and remembered counterparts: these are the elements which build themselves up by a sort of mental chemistry (the "gentle force of association") into a workable, workaday world.

What is so satisfactory about this rather humdrum universe? Principally the fact that there is no nonsense about it. "Superstition and enthusiasm" have been banished. The pretensions of theology, metaphysics, even political myth are brushed away, and the everyday wants of decent, sensible people are allowed to work themselves out as nature and its shadow, custom, provide. This is still the prevailing temper of modern empiricism. Lord Keynes in his essay, "My Early Beliefs," recalled its dominance in his Cambridge circle, notably in the case of Russell:

> Bertie in particular sustained simultaneously a pair of opinions ludicrously incompatible. He held that in fact human affairs were carried on after a most irrational fashion, but that the remedy was quite simple and easy, since all we had to do was to carry them on rationally.

For a Humean mentality these are two sides of a single coin. The irrationality of other people is due to the ridiculous prejudices and violent emotions by which they let themselves be carried away; one's own rationality is due to the absence of these. Indeed, it is not so much rationality in any metaphysical or transcendental sense as it is naturalness. So Hume writes:

> While a warm imagination is allowed to enter into philosophy, and hypotheses embraced merely for being specious and agreeable, we can never have any steady principles, nor any sentiments, which will suit with common practice and experience. But were these hypotheses once removed, we might hope to establish a system or set of opinions, which if not true (for that, perhaps, is too much to be hoped for),

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might at least be satisfactory to the human mind, and might stand the test of the most critical examination.

The gist of this attitude is: get rid of all the insanities and what is left is sane.

But, we may ask, who is to judge of this? Why are Hume's habits of belief better than anyone else's? Who can judge the sane and the insane, and by what right? Hume is brilliantly consistent in dealing with this question. He recognises explicitly that every theory which gives an account of human knowledge must include itself in the knowledge it legitimates; and so, meditating on the habit-forming associations of the human mind, he seeks no securer sanction for this meditation. He who is induced by habit to believe, habitually believes that he is so induced to believe. This is just a harmless habit of his own, built up associatively by the same kind of lucky accident as all his other beliefs. "Nature has determined us to judge, as well as to breathe and feel," and in this determination David Hume is avowedly in the same case with all the rest of us.

Moreover, if we feel uneasy about this purely irrational success of "reason," we may take comfort from our likeness in this to other creatures—as well as from the likeness of our powers to one another. In theory and practice, reason and will, in the constructs of experimental science or the generation of the moral sentiment out of sympathy, everywhere we see at work the same habit-building mechanisms—and in animals as in men. Thus Hume puts a section on "reason in animals," "love and hatred in animals," and so on, at the close of each part of the *Treatise*: for this hypothesis of his, in imitation of the method of the incomparable Newton, is strengthened by the fact that it accounts for many phenomena (including, as we have just seen, itself) rather than for only a few. So he says (and this is an instance of the application of his own method to itself):

> When . . . we see other creatures, in millions of instances, perform like actions, and direct them to like ends, all our principles of reason and probability carry us with an invincible force to believe the existence of a like cause.

Should anyone suggest an hypothesis with as broad a range, he will consider it equiprobable with his; but as most philosophical theories have prided themselves precisely on separating men from brutes, and theory from practice, they are not likely, by this analogical canon, to offer serious competition.

THIS, then, is Hume's plain common-sense world. But seen from another angle it is also the world of the sceptic. It is a world with no nonsense, yet a world with no sense either —and that for one principal reason: that there is nobody in it. Herein, not in his critique of the idea of causation, lies Hume's real scepticism. The self, he says, is a bundle of impressions—and though that is one of his more devastating expressions, there is quite literally nothing else for the self to be. Associative mechanisms cannot make a person: if there is, in Hume's view, no logical necessity to what I know, neither is there any responsible agent to assent to my knowing it. Habits just happen: sets of sense-data looked at one way make physical systems, looked at another, physiological or psychological ones. None of it is anyone's fault—or anyone's risk—or anyone's success. Hume himself in the Appendix to the *Treatise* acknowledged this limit of his own system. The mind is capable only of perceptions; all perceptions are separable; how shall we account for the togetherness even of that bundle of them which we may designate a mind or self? "For my part," he concludes, "I must plead the privilege of a sceptic, and confess that this difficulty is too hard for my understanding."

Yet this admission of scepticism is not an admission of defeat on Hume's part. The edifice he has constructed rests squarely on the tension between scepticism and commonsense: a tension which his concluding concession only draws a bit tauter. Looked at one way, the structure is not, theoretically, sound; but it holds up and we live in it, and the demands of life are such that we simply can't worry too much about these things most of the time. The "propensity to feign" carries us through. We know that our knowledge is if, more elaborate, very like that of Pavlov's dogs who expect food when the bell rings: the togethernesses of which we have made a world are no more logical or objective than those canine conjunctions. Yet our irrational hunches work and we rely on them.

But if we know this, we know too that they cannot carry us *beyond* common experience, whether of bells and food, or of falling bodies and acceleration, to abstruse and unconfirmable

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questions of Mind or Matter, of God or Immortality. Thus Hume's scepticism consists, not in vacillation between credulity and incredulity, but in a steady habit of seeing all mental operations and the mind itself as perceptions, of admitting differences in degree of vividness or intensity as the only type of distinction between classes of perception, and association as the only connection between them, and of confining philosophical explanation to the extremely limited area permitted by this restriction. As applied to the uncharted and unchartable seas of theology, the whole case is put most beautifully by Philo the sceptic in the opening of the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*:

> So long as we confine our speculations to trade, or morals, or politics, or criticism, we make appeals, every moment, to common sense and experience, which strengthen our philosophical conclusions, and remove (at least, in part) the suspicion, which we so justly entertain with regard to every reasoning, that is very subtle and refined. But in theological reasonings, we have not this advantage; while at the same time we are employed upon objects, which, we must be sensible, are too large for our grasp, and of all others, require most to be familiarised to our apprehension. We are like foreigners in a strange country, to whom everything must seem suspicious, and who are in danger every moment of transgressing against the laws and customs of the people, with whom they live and converse. We know not how far we ought to trust our vulgar methods of reasoning in such a subject; since, even in common life and in that province, which is peculiarly appropriated to them, we cannot account for them, and are entirely guided by a kind of instinct or necessity in employing them.

This is a wonderfully self-consistent, if self-limiting system, whose inconsistencies, if they are such, are at its edges. But for Hume himself these inconsistencies were only just and reasonable limits. He could approach and look beyond them without a trace of metaphysical nausea. Let us see how, within these limits, he used his theory in morals, politics, religion.

IT MAY seem difficult—and has seemed so sometimes to subsequent empiricists—to apply this delightfully simple conditioned-reflex view of mind to moral matters. But it was for their sake that Hume embarked on his investigation: the purpose of the *Treatise* was to introduce the experimental method into moral subjects. And here again the result is a brilliantly consistent—and rigorously self-limiting—system. Once more it all depends on limiting the activities of mind to perception. Our sensations of pleasure and pain are accompanied by feelings—loves, hatreds, in short, passions, some calm, some violent. These form associative patterns, as our ideas of objects do. Thus the pleasure we derive from an individual's society causes us to love him; but this love in turn produces a new, associated pleasure at the sight of the loved object—again increasing our love, and so on. We can even, since there is no metaphysical person and no rigid boundary in the experience of "mine" and "thine," feel, if less intensely than our own, the pleasures and pains *of* a loved person. And less intensely still, when we allow the prevalence over our minds of calm, not violent feeling, we can feel with assent or aversion the pains or pleasures of anyone as involved in the habits or actions of himself or anyone else. Thus the gift of sympathy (which, again, we share with animals) becomes, when attenuated and generalised, the taste for virtue, the perception of vice: the moral sentiment. It is by no means the principal motive of actions, if a motive at all; but it is a kind of reflective imagination turned, from a Lucretian eminence, on the characters of our fellow men.

Yet somehow morals must be authoritative. How can the calm passions exercise authority over the violent? The answer: as the burnt child shuns the fire—by custom and association. Moral taste is, like causal generalisation, a self-confirming custom. For the moral sense is a "calm general determination of the passions founded on some distant view or reflection," which approves whatever disposition is useful or agreeable to the person judged, or to any person affected by it, and disapproves the contrary. And it is precisely the calm as against the violent passions which are, by this moral sense, judged to be useful or agreeable, etc. Thus:

> . . . when we enumerate the good qualities of any person, we always mention those parts of his character which render him a safe companion, an easy friend, a gentle master, an agreeable husband, or an indulgent father.

What a world is in that list of adjectives! What confidence, what equanimity, what innocence! One is reminded of Fanny Price's fear that her adored Edmund might, in his infatuation with Mary Crawford, "cease to be

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respectable." For it is indeed a world in which the worst imaginable evil would be to cease to be respectable: a world in which, though we recognise the capriciousness of human nature, and the selfishness of most actions, yet

> . . . the intercourse of sentiments . . . in society and conversation, makes us form some general unalterable standard by which we may approve or disapprove of characters and manners. And though the *heart* does not always take part with those general notions, or regulate its love and hatred by them, yet are they sufficient for discourse, and serve all our purposes in company, in the pulpit, in the theatre, and in the schools.

THE moral sentiment, then, is generated by self-perpetuating habits on the ground of feelings common to all men:—or, at any rate, as it may seem to us, to most cultivated British gentlemen of the 18th century. But it is confirmed also, in Hume's case, by his own disposition. In the same chapter ("Of Benevolence") from which I have just been quoting, he gives himself away. "Men naturally, without reflection," he says,

> . . . approve of that character which is most like their own. The man of a mild disposition and tender affections, in forming a notion of the most perfect virtue, mixes in it more of benevolence and humanity than the man of courage and enterprise, who naturally looks upon a certain elevation of the mind as the most accomplished character. This must evidently proceed from the *immediate* sympathy, which men have with characters similar to their own. They enter with warmth into such sentiments, and feel more sensibly the pleasure which arises from them.

Gentleness was Hume's besetting virtue, and he read human nature somewhat in his own likeness. Of course he knew that the violent passions often overcome the calm: witness, for example, his colourful account of the Irish Insurrection of 1641. Yet he found this often the result of priestcraft and fanaticism generated in the many by the bad influence of the few. There was no reason in the nature of the case why the gentle passions should not sometimes of themselves prevail "according to the general character or present disposition of the person."

In fact, this benignity of his forms the deepest root of his sceptical system. In his experience as an historian, and before and beneath this, we may guess, in his childhood experience of the Scottish Kirk, he learned to associate theological speculation with fanaticism, and fanaticism with cruelty. And as, in his untroubled good nature, he hated cruelty, so he distrusted militant religion and its ally, militant metaphysics. Wholly pre-romantic in temper, he could look at hills purple with heather as so much loss to industry and profit. And philosophically, too, he preferred the well-kept lawns and gardens of an amiable society to wild moors of mystery inhabited by prophetic brigands or murdering saints.

FROM this disposition springs also, again with entire consistency, what has seemed to some the paradox of his Tory politics. Somehow, sceptics and empiricists are always supposed to to be liberal. But Hume, as Whig as politeness demanded in his own day, and decorously applauding "1688," became as an historian increasingly sympathetic to the Stuarts. He was particularly devoted to Charles I, in his view an amiable and virtuous prince, victim of the rampant enthusiasm of his time, which "being universally diffused, disappointed all the views of human prudence, and disturbed the operation of every motive which usually influences society." Faced with the zealous frenzies of Covenanters or Roundheads, Hume's very scepticism could not but strengthen such Stuart sympathies: read, for instance, his account of the outbreak in Scotland over the liturgy, or of the ruse by which Fairfax was got to pray for enlightenment at the very moment of the king's execution—what man of moderate humanity but would react with aversion to such unnatural admixtures of piety, violence, and fraud? No love of abstract liberty—and Hume loved no abstractions—could outweigh such living arguments. Even when writing of his own time, while he praises the judicious balance of the British government, he not only thinks the tide turning slightly toward the monarchy, but holds it more desirable (since "death is unavoidable to the political as well as to the animal body") that the British constitution should terminate in an absolute monarchy than in a popular government. Once more, it is not an abstract question "concerning any fine imaginary republic, of which a man may form a plan in his closet." But out of the British government as it is, Hume suggests, there might come either a tyranny of the Commons issuing in civil war and coming to rest at last in absolute monarchy, or absolute

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monarchy peacefully established from the start—the latter being therefore "the easiest death, the true *Euthanasia* of the British constitution."

On the other hand, the principles which made him mildly conservative in his politics—or better, the character in which those principles were lodged—made him at the same time a radical sceptic in religion. For the passion in him that came nearest to violence was the hatred of "priestcraft and fanaticism." It has sometimes been argued that it is Cleanthes, the scientific deist, who speaks for Hume in the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. But this posthumous work, which had held Hume's attention at intervals over a period of twenty-five years, puts a very weak case for deism. It is the agnosticism of Philo the sceptic which is enforced blow by blow in this, the most perfect piece of rhetoric in philosophical literature. What is so magnificent is not simply the overwhelming series of hypotheses by which Philo turns the tables on Cleanthes with his analogical argument; or the classic argument on evil by which the lamentations of the pious Demea on the wickedness and misery of men are turned to Philo's sceptical purpose. What is most astonishing is the way in which Hume–Philo, from his safe niche of commonsense reliance on common experience, surveys the hypotheses which bolder spirits have adopted to explain the origin of the universe. Has any philosopher ever looked with such clarity beyond the limits of his own mentality, ever seen so plainly what he does not see? A great array of alternative hypotheses is spread out before us: the Epicurean theology, the world soul of neo-Platonism, Spinoza's rational necessity, Plato's *Timaeus* (the world as an eternal living creature), even, in anticipation, the cosmology accepted by some of Hume's empirical descendants—the world originating in a vast explosion, now slowed down to an orderly rate "so as to present an uniformity of appearance, amidst the continual motion and fluctuations of its parts,"—the adaptation of animals and plants to their environment being due to what we now call natural selection. This last alternative would seem most sympathetic to a person of Hume's inclinations and beliefs; yet as they are all, to him, equally flights of fancy, they are all sketched with the same skilful pencil as so many *un*likely stories to which the man of sense, *and* therefore of scepticism, will attach no serious weight.

No wonder Hume's friends advised him against publishing the *Dialogues*. As it was, his contemporaries felt vividly enough the force of his reflective detachment from religious issues. Especially was this clear in the mood with which he faced a painful death. Forty years earlier he had written:

> The annihilation which some people suppose to follow upon death, and which entirely destroys this self, is nothing but an extinction of all particular perceptions; love and hatred, pain and pleasure, thought and sensation. These, therefore, must be the same with the self, since the one cannot survive the other.

Now he faced what on his own theory must be annihilation with all the good sense the theory had originally been intended to support. Poor Jamie Boswell, who called in to see David Hume, "just a-dying," recorded with horror his imperturbable equanimity. When his visitor, "he knew not how," brought the subject round to immortality, Hume in both wit and logic so outargued him as to evoke, in Boswell's phrase, "a sort of wild, strange, hurrying recollection of my excellent Mother's pious instructions," as well as of "Dr. Johnson's noble lessons." For Hume's friends the same mood only confirmed their admiration. Adam Smith wrote:

> Upon the whole, I have always considered him, both in his lifetime, and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will admit.

Such was the most amiable of British philosophers. What has become of his philosophy? His 18th century self-confidence, his implicit and unargued faith in the simple uniformity of human nature, even the 18th century turn of his benevolence—all these belong to a vanished world. Yet the First Book of his *Treatise* is still the canon for the principal practice of philosophy in Britain and America. The axioms which were, as he expressed them, intrinsically inherent in that lost world and in himself, its offspring, have shaken loose from their setting and, in strange isolation, dominate the direction and confine the scope of philosophical inquiry. Thus the scepticism which in Hume was the consequence of a positive aim and character has become in itself a dogma,

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doubt of which is held to be dangerous—if unintelligible—dogmatism. Moreover, this sceptical orthodoxy is still grounded in a completely Humean assessment of the nature and limits of our intellectual powers. Perception organised by habit: that is still, and more than ever, for contemporary philosophers, the acknowledged pattern of the mind.

This holds not only of thinking modelled on the crude behaviourism of the twenties—which is obviously Hume decivilised—but of all shades and varieties of scientifically-oriented thought. Russell, for example, in the *Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, explains that he is simply translating Hume's epistemology into the language of modern logic. Professor Braithwaite in his *Scientific Explanation* admits as his aim the assimilation of the complex deductive theories of modern physics to Hume's "constant conjunction" pattern. Donald Williams in a symposium on probability argues that the whole task of modern probability theory is still to deal with the problem of induction as Hume left it—and so on. Even when Hume is not explicitly invoked, the debt is obvious. John Dewey's pragmatism was wholly dependent on Hume's principles; logical positivism was an attempted formalisation of them; recent analytical philosophy tries to repair this rigidity and make them again more flexible. The result of this last effort, however, has been to confine still further the scope of philosophical reflection. Linguistic usage, which is now so popular a theme for philosophic discourse, is but a subspecies of Humean custom. It is a particularly useful subspecies—for when one comes up against an uncomfortably serious problem one can turn it into a question of the use of words and so evade it. This trick—supported by a superficial pretence of putting verbal habit into the context of other habits—is used over and over, with admirable virtuosity, to bestow an air of problem-solving on what is at bottom a technique of problem-dodging. Hume, in his securer world, could complacently survey the traditional riddles of philosophy and let them be. The Humes of our uneasier day must avoid at all costs such embarrassing confrontations: and that is just what their linguistic about-face manœuvre enables them to do. Thus a philosophy already limited has become more limited still. Stripped of its flesh and blood, the skeleton of Hume's system, its bare, unattractive conditioned-reflex logic, presides over the trivialisation of philosophy.

I MIGHT document these remarks by references to articles in *Mind* or *Analysis* or the *Proceedings* of the Aristotelian Society; but there is one document which reveals most authoritatively the situation I have in mind. That is the posthumous work of the acknowledged master of the analytical school, Ludwig Wittgenstein. It seems a far cry from the broad, happy, sweeping argument of Hume's *Treatise* to the inverted, imaginative, tortured subtleties of the *Philosophical Investigations*; yet it is here that the empirical philosophy Hume fathered has received its final and self-destroying form. Not that the influence was direct; but it was in the Cambridge circle of Moore and Russell that Wittgenstein began philosophising—and he seems to have taken the native empirical tradition more seriously, or more literally, than any British thinker ever did. He found a tradition previously expressed with British decorum and British practicality and pressed it, with Continental rigour and his own auger-like persistence, to its logical conclusion.

Of course it is true, as Wittgenstein's followers would at once protest, that he rejected in his last years the simple sensationalism of his own earlier period—and *a fortiori* the more easy-going sensationalism of Hume's *Treatise*. The mind for him was not a set of pictures; that is much too easy. Yet if in the later Wittgenstein a new theory of language has complicated matters—if in particular the naming of sensations now presents subtle and intricate problems—still something very like Humean "impressions" remains as the insistent boundary of his thought. The subservience to sensation is not so much alleviated as it is intensified to the point of agony. Wittgenstein is still bound hand and foot by Hume's subjectivism; but so inward is the concentration of his thought that it is the most subjective impressions of all—pain, depression, hope, excitement—the impressions of reflexion, in Hume's language, which most often captivate him. That is why the "particular feeling," the "quite particular process," looms so large in his thought. It is not that this is really all that other philosophers were looking for, and it wasn't there:—it's all that Wittgenstein, within the confining limits of *his* reality, can look for

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—and he is unswervingly consistent in looking for nothing else.

Moreover, within the closely restricted limits of his thought, what he has on hand to build a world, beyond *this* toothache or *that* melancholy, is precisely Hume's particularism —his insistence on the separability of sensations —in a more sophisticated form: *these* circumstances of linguistic use, *this* reading, *this* operational application of a formula, and so on. His central conception of the "family" of "language-games" is a logical device for particularising general concepts, more ingenious than Hume's or Berkeley's but with exactly the same intent. And, finally, it is through reliance on Hume's principle of association, if in modern dress, that this "family" concept operates: through the appeal to behaviour, training, habit. To mention just one example: Wittgenstein compares two "language-games": a gymnastics instructor giving orders to his pupil, and a chemist predicting the reactions of metals to acids. "There is," he says, "an evident kinship between these two language-games, and also a fundamental difference. In both, one might call the spoken words 'predictions'. But compare the training which leads to the first technique with the training for the second one." This is pure Hume, if it is comparatively crude and massive Wittgenstein. Yet even in the more delicate reasonings of the *Philosophical Investigations*, and in the impression of its author's genius which it overwhelmingly conveys, it is still the spirit of Hume that speaks—though it is Hume with a tragic rather than a comic mask. It is the empiricist become so subtle that the propensity to feign is lost to him, he can no longer retire in unsceptical mood to play backgammon with his friends, but must either gaze and gaze at the vanishing minutiæ of subjectivity, or circle round and round the habits of speech themselves which are the only landscape left in the metaphysically empty world.

IN THE consistent and rigorous expression of Hume's principles we have achieved a null-point philosophy from which, within the Humean tradition, there is no egress. What path is left to us? To reflect afresh on the character of human knowledge, and in particular of the mind as knower—and so to accept Hume's challenge. For after confessing the profoundest difficulty of his own position: that his account of mind or person is "very defective," he continues, in the paragraph from the Appendix already quoted:

> For my part, I must plead the privilege of a sceptic, and confess that this difficulty is too hard for my understanding. I pretend not, however, to pronounce it absolutely insuperable. Others, perhaps, or myself, upon more mature reflection, may discover some hypothesis that will reconcile these contradictions.

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Communications

"Berlin Broadcasts"

SIR—I was very interested in the P. G. Wodehouse "Berlin Broadcasts" in your recent issues.

I wonder if we could have an authoritative opinion (e.g. by a barrister) in a future issue upon whether Mr. Wodehouse broke any moral or legal obligations in making the broadcasts.

I think personally that he infringed no moral code when he made the broadcasts and I am positive that no legal charge of treason could have been made against him.

Although I have produced the broadcasts as evidence, my friends tell me that P. G. Wodehouse was not only disloyal to his country of birth, but if he had returned to this country after the war would have had to stand trial as a traitor; he is accused of consorting with the King's enemies and of providing propaganda for them.

I hope you will be able to clear up this argument as it seems to me to be an issue of some importance.

B. STRONG

Ryde, Isle of Wight

[The legal authorities we have questioned say the notion of "consorting with the King's enemies" is a vague one, and that the legal action implied by it can be determined only by the specific situation, the temper of the times, etc. As for the moral issue, the general opinion, as far as we can ascertain it, seems to be as follows: (1) Mr. Wodehouse ought not to have made the broadcasts, since they could be regarded as a kind of service to his country's enemies—if only in encouraging people to listen to their radio stations, and (2) the violent accusations levelled against Mr. Wodehouse were ill-informed and hysterical. What puzzles us most is why the BBC never released the texts of these broadcasts, instead of regarding them as top secret—that would have saved us all a lot of trouble.—Ed.]

French Silence and American Poetry

SIR—I thought Harold Rosenberg's article "French Silence and American Poetry" one of the most brilliant I had ever read. . . .

WAYLAND YOUNG

London, W.2

SIR—Twice, now, I have read the article, "French Silence and American Poetry," in your December number, trying to guess why you printed this formless succession of unvalidated assertions—all of them peremptory, most of them acrimonious—and I am still mystified. The central argument seems to be that the best American poets wrote, till not too long ago, in American; now, confound them, their successors write in English. Those best who wrote in American, however, "frenchified" (the author's transitive verb). That is to be laid at the door of those old devils, Pound and Eliot. But Pound and Eliot still rule the roost, and for an American poet "to be respectable," he need only do as they do. Perhaps you think that means "frenchifying?" Not at all. "To be respectable" the American disciple of Pound and Eliot "need only learn to love Merrie Olde Englande."

I pass the vulgarity of this thesis and ask, what does it all mean?

The author writes with equal authority about French poetry. Thus he says that "Mallarmé or Valéry cuts the word 'palm' out of the old (*sic*) poetry in order to make it into a finger touching a new experience (*'simple doigt de l'air'*)." The quotation is from Valéry and the author has misread it.

L'or léger qu'elle murmure
Sonne au simple doigt de l'air. . . .

Literally, the light (or impalpable) gold that the palm murmurs (of the palm's murmur) resounds at the simple finger (touch) of the air. Or if you prefer,

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at the touch of the breeze, the rustling palm-leaf gives off a golden sound. It is not the palm that is a finger *of* the air, which would be worse than absurd, it would be a failure as metaphor. And the finger of the air is not an invention, it is a commonplace.

LEWIS GALANTIÈRE

New York

[Mr. Rosenberg comments: If my "French Silence and American Poetry" confuses Mr. Galantière, his criticism of it confuses me still more. Most likely, we are talking about different things—certainly, Mr. Galantière does not indicate any interest in silence. . . .

His tone would suggest that he found me trespassing on some cultural installation, which I was not aware was under his charge.

As for the "finger" reference, it was quite superfluous for Mr. Galantière to prove that he reads French. Yet apart from this aim, it must have been obvious that I was re-using Valéry's metaphor, not translating it.]

More French ?

SIR—I have just renewed my subscription to "ENCOUNTER," which I find extremely interesting.

I should like to suggest, however, that you give rather more attention to France and to French culture. Mendès-France is more attractive, and, probably far more important than McCarthy, while Camus, Sartre, Malraux, etc. seem to me better subjects for essays than obscure Hungarian, or even German, poets. Very few people in this country, too, can ever hope to read works by Indian and Japanese writers, but a series of articles on modern French writers, including older men like Mauriac, would supply a real want that no periodical other than ENCOUNTER seems fitted to provide.

In all other respects, please accept warmest congratulations.

C. D. JAMES

Cardiff

Men and Ideas

SIR—Congratulations on the "Men and Ideas" series which to some extent mercifully belies the implications of your change on the masthead from Politics to Current Affairs. Some of our newspapers cover Current Affairs ably enough. To the student they are a melting-pot out of which he can pull little or nothing worth anything except when set in relation to other men and other ideas, that is, history, politics, what-you-will.

D. C. DAVIES

University of Manchester

[The shift from "politics" to "current affairs" was simply to make room for the travel reports, sociological essays, etc., which we publish. The term "politics" has, by usage, become too narrow to include all the things that might once have been regarded as political.—Ed.]

Who's Depressed ?

SIR—Seeing that railwaymen have just got a gain only by the threat of a national strike, the tenor of M. Raymond Aron's piece in the January issue on "Nations and Ideologies" seems singularly escapist at least so far as Britain is concerned. We are, in my estimation, just entering a period of terrific row and argument.

And one shouldn't deceive oneself over such inaccuracies as M. Aron's paragraph starting "Redistribution of wealth. . . ." I am a £2,000-a-year man and I don't find taxation crushing. My income tax has come down quite a lot since the war—as you'll see by looking up the annual Budget's tax tables which show the actual overhead taxation per £ earned income (all mine is earned). In the ten years since the war, a married man with a wife and two children earning £2,000 a year has had his income tax reduced by £6 5*s.* a week. A man in similar circumstances earning £3,000 a year has had a cut of £5 per week.

The people to sting, and who are obviously going to be stung, are those who do so well out of unearned income. The salaried middle class, among whom I work and live, are doing very well, thank you. My scientific friends don't complain, nor do my engineering acquaintances. After all, they practically all have cars, TV, and what-not, live in their own homes and generally flourish. I know young doctors, lawyers, civil servants, and others; and none is approaching the poverty line.

This persistent talk of literary gents about the hard-hit middle class is nonsense. As one of my friends says: "Give me the salary and I'll find the tax."

P. HOLLAND

London, S.W.16

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BOOKS

The Literary Situation in Japan

THE present climate of Japanese literature is difficult to convey because little is known outside the country about the literature itself, and even less about its climate at any time at all. Every author or the title of every book mentioned would have to be accompanied by explanations, possibly with dates, and, should that be done conscientiously, the result would resemble more a formidable page out of some encyclopædia than a literary article, the purpose of which is to entertain as well as instruct.

However, Dr. Donald Keene has pointed out in his *Japanese Literature** the similarities between Japanese literary productions and those of Europe and America since about 1900 onwards, showing that this literature has "now assumed the shape of local or regional variations on the main stream of modern literature, and not, as earlier, of an entirely independent tradition." This is quite correct, and it might be possible to give an idea of what Japanese literature is like today by assuming that what Dr. Keene says has been demonstrated and understood, and taking up the tale from the period a few years after the war when his book was written. (Incidentally, the book can be recommended unreservedly to anyone having an interest in, and little knowledge of, Japanese literature, not only because there does not happen to be any other convenient handbook of its kind but also because it is in itself such an excellent piece of literary criticism.)

The years following the war affected Japanese literature in two ways. The reading public expanded to an extent undreamed of before the war, and, at the same time, there was a considerable falling-off in the quality of that public. The latter fact might be accounted for by the former; but it is not so easy to say off-hand why so many people started wanting to read after the war. Life under war conditions began in Japan two years earlier than it did in Europe; those conditions grew steadily worse as the war progressed, leaving people both young and old little leisure for reading and a very restricted amount of printed matter even if they did want to read. This last fact may have led people to take an interest in books, an interest which turned into something like a craving that had to be satisfied immediately the war was over and publishers started publishing again. Another possible reason is that the Japanese Constitution was revised after the war, abolishing armament and banishing war in any form; it was announced that Japan was in the future to contribute to the welfare of the world as a "cultural state," whatever that might mean. One consequence of this rather vague term was that everybody wanted to become cultured, which led to a rush for books, either of an easily digestible nature, such as novels, or others so abstruse in content that it would be considered cultured to go about carrying them.

Whatever the reasons might be, the fact remains that the consumption of books and magazines increased to something like five or six times what it used to be before the war, and has remained at that level. From the business point of view it is just as well. Book-production costs have increased in proportion to the general rise in prices, forcing the publishers

* *Japanese Literature*. By DONALD KEENE. John Murray. 5s.

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either to raise the prices of their books to five or six hundred times what they were before the war, or to find more customers. But, actually, there was no question of a choice about the matter, because although people will pay almost anything for food and clothing when they are hard to get, there is a limit to what they will spend on books which, properly considered, do not constitute a part of the necessities of life. The increase in the number of readers enabled publishers to keep down the prices of books to about a hundred or a hundred and fifty times what they were before, and this fact probably saved the book-producing industry, including authors.

To give some figures: A literary magazine up to the middle years of the war (after which free publishing virtually ceased) was considered a phenomenal success if it sold six thousand copies a month. Now there are four literary magazines selling anything from thirty thousand to fifty thousand copies a month, and—what is important—thirty thousand is the figure at which a magazine becomes self-supporting. Before and during the livable part of the war, books were issued in editions of from five hundred to a thousand copies. Now the first edition of a book would have to be at least three thousand copies to be a business proposition, and would have to sell twenty or thirty thousand to really pay. A book that sold ten thousand copies before the war would have been a best-seller, but now a best-seller means a book that sells over a hundred thousand, and often goes into millions.

The sudden increase in readers brought about a falling-off in taste, and even in the general capacity to understand what is contained in a printed page. This leads one to think of another reason for the increase in readers, and it is this: readers of modern literature had been steadily increasing in Japan long before the war started, and the increase in potential readers may have continued throughout the war, without there being books for them to read. It is rather like the post-war housing problem; the demand was held up over a number of years and there was an indiscriminate rush on all sides when production started again. These potential readers were not given the opportunity to educate themselves in the normal way by starting to read at the early age most book-lovers do. The flood of books after the war could not have been a help to them in choosing what to read, and if the confusion has resulted in a certain lowering of literary standards, perhaps we might console ourselves with the thought that it could have been worse.

THIS brings us at last to the writers themselves (a great deal of explaining had to be done, after all, and perhaps more will be needed). What we have said before does not mean that serious writers began writing in "basic" to please the populace and wallowing in riches in consequence. Besides the natural increase in the kind of readers who would have read them anyway, these serious writers were protected in their old way of writing by the yearning of the new post-war class of readers to be "cultured," with the resultant mania for anything or anybody that was considered a part of "culture." But the increase in the number of readers did create a new demand for writers which has not yet been adequately met even today, so that not only were writers with established reputations provided for, but a whole group of new writers were discovered and given a social standing to which they would not have been able to aspire in such a short time in pre-war days. Some writers went deliberately into money-making by turning out popular fiction and criticism, or the kind of high-class fiction and criticism that is popular, and these people do seem to be wallowing in riches. All things considered, perhaps the demand for writers and the fall in taste of the reading public may be said to have had only one bad result, and that is that they have called into being a host of new writers, apart from those who are *really* new, who from the literary point of view need not have gone into the writing business at all.

The course is now open in this letter either to take up the work of these writers of popular and fashionably high-class literature for individual scrutiny and castigation, or to say something about those both old and new who really merit our attention. No one likes to make enemies; and ENCOUNTER has quite a number of readers in Japan. It would be wiser, and more profitable all round, to choose the second course.

The novel is the first literary form that comes to mind in writing of the literature of any country; and in Japan there are so many of them being turned out, and in such a

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variety of genres, that it is difficult to generalise. The popular notion here seems to be that a high-class novel must always have for its subject the contemporary scene, and that historical fiction is, at best, second-rate reading matter. In spite of this, and in spite of a mass-production of really popular second-rate historical fiction, at least two historical novels were written in 1954 which definitely mark an advance on anything that was written before in the same field. They are *Karasan Yashiki* by Ibusē Masuji (Ibusē is the surname—Japanese first names come after the surname) and *Fūrin Kazan* by Inonē Yasushi. The names and titles mean nothing in an English context; and it would be hopeless to attempt to give an idea of what the novels deal with, since the history of Japan is as little known outside the country as her literature is. It would be better here to concentrate on the authors. Ibusē is a novelist of long standing who since the war has been confirmed in his position as one of the foremost men of Japanese letters. His reputation was finally established after the end of the war because he had attained his real maturity about that time; but he already had by then a long list of works in which he had gradually perfected a distinctive manner of conveying the savour of real life through the always slightly distorted words and actions of his characters—a form of comedy through which the Japanese soul keeps peeping out. Most of these novels and short stories were concerned with life in contemporary Japan, as would be required if he was to be accepted as a modern Japanese writer with any literary pretentions. But last year, in his historical novel, he turned the same talents to revivifying some well-known personages in Japanese history with refreshing results. It may not be so meaningless in this connection to add that the period chosen is late 16th century, when Christianity first came into Japan bringing with it Negroes and other such curiosities, and he makes surprisingly good use of the Negro in the story.

Inonē Yasushi was not known before the war. He is one of the new writers who appeared with the post-war publishing boom, and one of the few who really count. On the whole, his novels so far have been concerned with the contemporary scene, as is the case with most Japanese authors with reputations to keep up, and lacks the point and polish of Ibusē's work; although, written as they were

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to meet the easy-going demands of the present public taste, they are not so bad as one might expect. But there is much more than that in his recent historical novel. The period dealt with is the same as in Ibusē's, but the country having been divided up in those days into practically watertight feudal territories, the scene is quite different—which is about all we shall say about the story. The important thing is that, as in Ibusē's historical novel the hackneyed characters of Japanese history live again as individual men and women, so that we forget that we are reading about people of the 16th century, or rather, that we are living in the twentieth. Neither Ibusē's nor Inonē's novel roused any comment here because the material was historical and therefore beneath an "advanced" critic's notice. But the fact that the same perfection in craftsmanship was shown by a past-master of the art of fiction and a writer who has only become known in the last few years does seem to reassure us on the question of the tradition of modern Japanese literature—what there can be of it in fifty years—being preserved and transmitted.

NOVELS of contemporary life are turned out by the hundreds every year; and the novelists who write most are apt to draw the most attention. Perhaps the chief thing these writers are to be commended for is their industry. There is no lack of market for their goods and it would be nearer the truth to say that they can't write enough. There are, besides the four literary magazines already mentioned, four or five large magazines "for amusement" (literary magazines are supposed to instruct as well as to amuse) with most of their pages devoted to fiction in one form or another; five or six women's magazines with fabulous circulations and each about as thick as a book, the fiction part of which has to be filled up somehow month by month; and all the Japanese newspapers which, to be respectable, have to carry at least two serial novels, one in the morning edition and the other in the evening. This means that as soon as a novelist achieves a certain amount of popularity, he has his work cut out for him as much to refuse offers as to write whatever he has accepted to write.

This sort of a feverish activity may act as a stimulant, or it may become the cause of a lot of slip-shod work. But the average of good novels turned out does not seem to have gone up since the war in spite of all this writing, and, as before the war, the number of new novels worth mentioning probably does not come to more than two or three a year. The difference lies in the life portrayed, since superficially a great deal has certainly changed with the ending of the war and the coming of the Americans; perhaps, also, one might take into account such other extraneous factors as the abolition of censorship. There may even be some real advance in the quality of writing. Having to address a far greater public than formerly, a writer has to pay a fair amount of attention to intelligibility; and there certainly has been a renewal of clarity in Japanese prose, an element which had been wanting for the past thirty years (thirty-five years ago it was different again, but there is no space to deal with the question here). The next thing to discuss, then, is what the contemporary matter dealt with in these novels is like, and to look at those contemporary novels written since the war that are worth consideration.

A novel is considered high-class here if it deals with some theory about life or society and politics—preferably society and politics—that may be looked upon as having a leaning towards the left. The Japanese conception of leftist ideology is easy to define: it consists of a number of sentiments without much relation to each other, such as hatred of the Americans, of atomic bombs, of the government (any government in power at the moment), love of the Russians, an even greater love of the Communist Chinese, a hankering for a vaguely Marxist revolution, and a kind of pity mixed with contempt of the backward Japanese race. It is inevitable that works of fiction written in this vein should have an air of unreality about them, so (thankfully) we can pass them by.

There are, however, some good writers without leftist ideologies who have appeared in the last ten years, and all with a very solid grounding in some form of foreign literature, whether pre-Revolution Russian, or Chinese, or French, or English, or classical Japanese which, as far as modern Japanese literature is concerned, might well be regarded as a different literature altogether. Perhaps the reason why last year's literary output was not particularly remarkable for good fiction is that one of the best of these writers, Ō-oka Shōhei, was away

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for most of the time touring Europe and America. Ō-oka used to be known before the war chiefly for his critical studies and his translations of the works of Stendhal. He was with our army in the Philippines during the disastrous latter part of the war and was taken prisoner by the Americans; he made a name for himself as a novelist on returning to Japan by an account of his experiences before and during his captivity, written with a Stendhalian precision. His chief claim to fame, however, lies so far in a much more imaginative use he made of those experiences in a later novel called *The Fires in the Plain*, in which the cannibalism of starving soldiers is somehow made to link up with the Christian doctrine concerning the Mass. This may sound shocking to Christians, but the extraordinary force of the presentation would seem to prove that the analogy established in the novel is a valid one. It is, in fact, the only novel written in Japanese to date in which the Western idea of God is represented with anything like the power the idea has in Europe. The novel is soon to appear in a translation in France.

Compared with this, the rest of the better sort of novels produced since the war strike one as being more remarkable for the promise shown than for any actual achievement. This may be thought a poor haul in contrast to the vast amount of words written and pagee printed which constitute post-war Japaness literature; but, then, modern Japanese literature itself is one of promise and not yet of achievement. It began by trying to render in the Japanese language ideas taken from the West; and it is only now that, after fifty years of experiment, those ideas have begun to take root in the strange Japanese soil. One might bear in mind another factor: that for the last twenty years or so, literary criticism has always been ahead of fiction and poetry in Japan, and that it is still so today. For every promising novel one could cite at least three works of literary criticism that are finished products of this particular genre. But there again, one has to explain who and what are the authors and books discussed in any given piece of criticism, and one would be in danger of losing oneself in the necessary explanations. One might mention at least two studies of Mozart's music written since the war by literary critics, and one on Balzac; but they would need the space of another article for adequate exposition. The one thing really needed in this business of introducing modern Japanese literature abroad is a whole series of translations undertaken by English and American writers with sufficient knowledge of modern Japan.

Kenichi Yoshida

" THAT MAN OF BLOOD, CHARLES STUART "

THE belief that history can repeat itself is not in favour, and we are not supposed to believe in a "march of history" either. Nevertheless we do slyly think in terms of such things because, unreasonable and unlikely as they are, acceptance of them makes history the more followable and therefore credible. And whatever thinkers may say, the evidence for parallels and recurrences of pattern, not explainable by coincidence, is very abundant, nowhere more so than in the sad company of European kings with whose fates dynasties have been eclipsed or terminated. The career of Nicholas II of Russia in our time conformed perfectly to that kind of crowned unsuccess and tragedy which was made classic in 17th century England. Charles I was the archetype of the mild, blinkered, respectable, courageous, royal blunderer, whose appearance in a nation's story is an infallible storm signal.

Miss C. V. Wedgwood has written a first-class study* of the four and a half years of Charles's reign from 1637 to the end of 1641. She opens with a "portrait of the age" drawn with a sure hand on a broad canvas, and she then proceeds to the events of the last years of peace before the Great Rebellion. The first part of the book is ominously entitled "The Happiest King in Christendom," which was how Charles described himself to his nephew the Elector Palatine. The heading of the second part is plain, "Challenge from Scotland." Then

* *The King's Peace.* By C. V. WEDGWOOD. Collins. 25s.

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Miss Wedgwood's unusual dramatic skill appears in the third and last sub-title, "An Army in Ireland." This concluding section is much the largest of the book and most of it lies in England and Scotland, so much so that the reader is often puzzled by the heading under which its seven chapters are assembled. But the riddle is answered and justified. For the army raised by Strafford as Lord Deputy in Ireland was the great, and, if not the dominating, the most vexing and complicating factor in the background. This army might have solved the King's military problem in the North, but its existence was one reason why he could not make peace with his Scottish subjects, and it lost him thousands of obedient followers South of the border. At the trial of Lord Strafford in 1641, it was asserted that the minister had urged the King to use the army for the conquest of England. The charge was untrue and failed as it deserved, but a belief that something like it was true persisted. Here was to be found one of the deepest causes of Strafford's execution, that appalling act of injustice for allowing which the King (a little to his honour) never ceased to reproach himself. It is impossible to know what were Charles's own final intentions for the army in Ireland, because the instrument suddenly and fearfully broke in his hands. The triumph of Parliament over Strafford was a triumph of English and Scots over the Irish nation, and this meant more than was realised. No one had thought about Irish nationalism, least of all Charles, in his reckless intrigues with Lord Antrim and Sir Phelim O'Neil. The last consequence of having raised the army in Ireland followed its disbandment in 1641, and this was the Irish Rebellion, "disordered, elemental, desperate," a last stand against Protestant ascendancy. No one could control a rising of its fierce, primitive character, but the King was widely considered responsible for its outbreak, and in a way this was true.

THE outcome of these anguished mid-century years depended on many things but chiefly on two: the character of Charles I and the religious controversies of the time. The political conflict might have been largely avoided, and even used to strengthen the crown, if there had not been a religious conflict to intensify it, and if Charles had not had the true-to-form second-rate man's distrust and impatience with weightier minds than his own. His position was in some ways not unlike that of his brother-in-law, Louis XIII, and like the French King he had Ministerial agents capable of the immense task of erecting a centralised grand monarchy. But while Louis knew himself to be lacking in the will and ability needed for absolute and unaided kingship, Charles was misled into believing he could be independent of all advisors by his fatal array of talent. He was the equal of anyone in thinking of ingenious intrigues, though he was too ignorant of the world, and much too lazy, to carry them out successfully. He had unusual power to charm. He was a generous and discerning patron of art, and to read of his exquisitely produced masques is to regret that one was not invited to attend them. In some ways he resembled another of the modern doomed sovereigns of Europe, the German Emperor William II. Like the unfortunate last Hohenzollern he was deceived by his own cleverness into believing that he possessed sagacity and statesmanship. So, while Louis the tortoise had the sense to obey Richelieu in most things, whether he wanted to or not, the politically hare-brained Charles lost both Strafford and Archbishop Laud, having never used either of them to full advantage.

There is no villain in the story. In the 17th century, that regal age when men already corrupted by power went to school to Machiavelli, Charles was the superior of most sovereigns in personal virtue and even in public honesty, while, in his extreme reluctance to apply torture or to inflict the revolting capital punishments of the time in order to obtain popularity, he was far above his brother kings abroad and his Parliamentary opposition at home. He seems not to have assassinated anyone. It is unlikely that any of his deceits and shifts (except in the Irish affair) really shocked the moral sense of his enemies. His main fault was an underlying silliness. Not the least of Miss Wedgwood's excellencies in this book is her sure and subtle and frequent indication that, despite his sincere and noble attachment to the Church of England as he understood her, and despite his impressive bearing on all occasions, Charles I was in large measure as frivolous as his eldest son. In a key passage she says:

> His casual attitude to his council, his unwillingness to listen to disturbing information, his hunting three

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or four times a week, the long hours spent in pursuit or enjoyment of works of art, or in theological discussion—all tell the same tale: he was not interested in practical administration. He idled away the opportunities of his reign, while his two ablest ministers . . . exchanged their troubled letters.

QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA had inherited none of the astuteness and genius for opportunism of her father, Henry IV of France and Navarre, but she does seem to have inherited all his "gladness of character." Like her husband, she is an archetype, standing at the head of a line of tragic and fatally meddlesome consorts. But there is a difference between her and her successors. It is difficult to sympathise with the pitiful last Tsarina; impossible to admire poor Eugénie; and very easy to see Marie Antoinette through sea-green eyes; but we are always left with the impression that Henrietta Maria was irresistible. The evidence is that she was a "*jolie laide*" of the most seductive kind. She was calamitous. She never seems to have given her husband good advice, and rarely failed to give him some advice. The example of her brother Louis XIII was lost on her, and because she did not like Strafford personally, she did not strengthen the King's natural inclination to rescue the English Richelieu from the brutal spite of his enemies. Charles recognised his private betrayal of Strafford, but may always have been blind to the political folly of allowing his execution. Henrietta Maria was certainly unconscious of what this could mean.

She must not be blamed too much. It was only at the end of the 17th century that men could grasp what had happened in the political world during the age of the Thirty Years War. The political tendency had been towards grand monarchy, and the wars of religion had tended to accelerate the process. In England, for various fortuitous reasons, the religious conflict had strengthened an opposite tendency, and it must have been impossible to see that this was a permanent tendency, until the age of the French wars. This fact probably explains a good deal of James II. His work at the Admiralty proves that he was not an idiot, but he was unable to grasp the improbable situation which arose from Charles I's failure to be the English Louis XIII. Charles II had delayed his purpose so it fell to his brother to be our Louis XIV. He was condemned to try to carry out the great 17th century dynastic effort in a

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MACMILLAN

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country which the religious quarrel had unpredictably flung back on to its medieval institutions. The failure of our *rois soleils* and our Richelieu is our greatest stroke of historical good luck. We missed thereby having a Louis XV, and we were spared a guillotine, and, who knows, we may yet be led by it to discover the still hidden art of sound democratic rule.

MISS WEDGWOOD'S book defies criticism most of the time. The writing is strong, clear, delightful throughout, and her sense of character provides light upon light on the opacities of an extraordinarily complicated past. The book might have been more valuable if she had related the situation of the British throne to that of European monarchy in general, and if she had examined the relation, or unrelation, of the religious quarrel in the British Isles to that which prompted the Thirty Years War on the Continent. In one passage there seems to be a rather bad slip. One of the most remarkable men of 17th century England was Algernon Percy, Lord Northumberland, whom Charles, with characteristic foolishness, alienated from his cause. Miss Wedgwood asserts that this man abandoned the royal party after Strafford's execution, and she suggests that part of his reason for so doing was contemptuous disgust at Charles's betrayal of his chief and best minister. She adds that Northumberland and Strafford were friends. Surely this is wrong. Northumberland might have been expected to be Strafford's friend after the support he had received from him, but the fact remains that he gave evidence against Strafford during the latter's trial, a deed which understandably hurt and angered the King. Afterwards Northumberland wrote to a friend that he had lost royal favour because he had not perjured himself for Strafford, as the King wanted. None of this sounds remotely like friendship of any kind for Strafford, or suggests that for his sake Northumberland threw over Charles—but I am prepared to be corrected by the author of this deeply studied record.

It is good news that *The King's Peace* is the prelude to further books in which Miss Wedgwood intends to relate the course of the Civil War and the Republican Commonwealth. The end of the first act, as it is presented here, again shows that Miss Wedgwood is a narrative artist in the first rank. The moment is November 1641. The Irish Rebellion is producing barbarism in the sister island, and the King thinks little of it. He has paid a disastrous visit to Scotland in which, so he believes, his personal charm has again conquered all hearts for him. Pym has just obtained a narrow majority in the Commons for the Grand Remonstrance. The curtain comes down on a last glimpse of Charles I enjoying one of his many refreshing moments of optimism and confidence:

> Early on the morning of November 23rd, 1641, while the Members of the House of Commons slept off the effects of their late night, the King and his following were once more upon the road, a distinguished, orderly, elegant cavalcade, moving towards London.

Christopher Sykes

TOYNBEE AND THE HISTORICAL IMAGINATION

THE last four volumes of Mr. Toynbee's work* confront the reviewer with formidable difficulties. They are the culmination of a gigantic effort, gigantic both in quantity and quality, the like of which no other contemporary has dared to undertake. Thus it is impossible to try to assess the value of Mr. Toynbee's last volumes without raising the general question as to the intention and achievement of his work as a whole.

This inevitable expansion of the scope of the reviewer's task raises, however, a deeper difficulty still. We can do real justice to somebody else's intention and achievement only on the condition that his intention and achievement is commensurate with our own. We can judge what others have tried to do and have done only if we ourselves have tried to do, or at least have dreamt of doing, what they have done. What transcends the limits of our own intention and achievement, we can praise or condemn but cannot judge; for our inner experience has been prevented by its self-

* *A Study of History. Vols. VII-X.* By ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE. Oxford University Press. £7 10s.

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imposed limitations from creating the standards of valuation commensurate with the intentions and achievements transcending it. I can judge a poem, or a novel, or a work of history without ever having written one; for I have at least dreamt of writing one.

Who in our time has dreamt of doing what Mr. Toynbee has been trying to do? Since hardly anybody has, Mr. Toynbee's work has received scant justice. It is being praised by the multitude and those critics who write for it; for there is a great satisfaction in identifying oneself, through praise, with an undertaking which is so much bigger than anything oneself would even try to engage in. It has been damned by the specialists who, in applying their narrow standards, have found it wanting in this or that particular. Both types of critics have looked at Mr. Toynbee's work as a kind of monstrosity whose bigness either overwhelms or irritates them.

However, it ought to be possible to scale down Mr. Toynbee's work, as it were, to normal human proportions, isolating certain specific problems which it poses. These problems must fall short of the general intention of the work, but they surpass in breadth and depth any of the many technical problems of fact and interpretation the work raises. Our judgement of the contribution which Mr. Toynbee has made to the solution of these "intermediate" problems may shed some light on the general value of the work.

THREE such problems have come to the mind of this reviewer: historiography, philosophy of history, and religion.

Mr. Toynbee's work poses anew, by implication, the problem of historiography. If what Mr. Toynbee is doing is a valid writing of history, then most of what is going by the name of academic history is, at worst, irrelevant or, at best, mere preparation. On the other hand, if the writing of history is a science with all that the word "science" connotes in terms of the use of documentary evidence and the renunciation of judgements of value, then certainly Mr. Toynbee is not a historian. This conflict between two conceptions of history is not likely to be resolved through methodological argument; for within that argument the philosophic assumption predetermines the conclusion. Method being a means to an end,

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achievement is the only valid test of method. What, then, is it that we expect history to achieve?

Burckhardt has told us that it is the purpose of history" to make us not clever for one day but wise forever." History imparts its wisdom by giving a meaningful account of the life and deeds of men who came before us. This account receives its meaning from the connection which the selective and appraising mind of the historian establishes between the data of history and the perennial concerns of man.

If this be the standard by which history must be judged, then Mr. Toynbee's contribution dwarfs scientific historiography, not in this or that of its manifestations, but as a category of historic thinking. The great achievement of Mr. Toynbee as a historian lies in that very subjectivity which is the horror of scientific historiography. Mr. Toynbee has recovered the courage, which the scientific dogma had put to sleep, to ask from history questions which are meaningful for him and, through him as a man, for other men as well, and to force history to answer him. Never mind that history may have no answer to some of the questions Mr. Toynbee asks, that the facts are sometimes arranged to produce the answers expected, and that not all the "facts" are facts in the scientific sense. Mr. Toynbee has awakened the historic imagination from its dogmatic slumber; he has communicated his own wonderment about the ways of man to his readers, and through innumerable flashes of insight, suggestive reinterpretations, and fertile hypotheses he has demonstrated by his own example the worth of historiography in the classic manner.

Compare with the richness and infectious dynamics of his historic imagination the unproblematic poverty of scientific historiography! The "science" of history leaves nothing to the imagination. What cannot be proven by the documents not only is not true but can have no meaning to be communicated by the historian. To have demonstrated, not through argument but through example, the richness of philosophic historiography, however problematical in detail, as over against the self-impoverishment of "scientific" history, unproblematic in detail but a problem in its very conception of history, is the great merit of Mr. Toynbee's work. What in our time had become a mere historic recollection, Mr. Toynbee has again made a living reality: the creativeness of the historic imagination.

THIS historic imagination is not at the service of history, properly speaking. It is not Mr. Toynbee's purpose to give a coherent account of the historic process. His purpose is philosophic rather than historical. He searches for the laws which determine the rise and fall of civilisations.

On the face of it, such an undertaking appears to be sociological rather than philosophic. For it appears to require, not the philosophic assessment of the different civilisations from an overall world view, but rather the empirical analysis of the morphology of civilisations, proceeding from empirically verifiable similarities to ever broadening generalisations. The main categories which Mr. Toynbee employs, such as challenge and response, contacts in space and contacts in time, point to such a sociological intent. And in page after page the work reads like a gigantic collection of sociological essays and aphorisms, of illuminating similarities and analogies across the accustomed barriers of historic time, but loosely held together by the work's general plan. Still, the general plan is philosophic and could have been no other. For what Mr. Toynbee sets out to do is beyond the ken of empirical verification.

The possibility of all empirical verification resides in the shared perspective of all actual and potential observers. Astronomy as empirical science is possible because observers with the same perceptive and rational faculties look at the same object from the same planetary perspective. The deeper we move from the world of nature into the world of man as the subject and object of valuations, the more we find the objectivity of empirical science qualified by the ever narrowing limits of common perspective. For astronomy these limits are for all practical purposes irrelevant, since they coincide with the confines of the earth. In the sciences of man the rational core, common to all science, is diminished, obscured, and distorted by the inevitably partial perspective of the observer.

That impairment is minimised when both the object and the perspective of observation are identical with the confines of a particular civilisation. A parochial civilisation, looking at itself from the perspective of its own values,

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can achieve a high degree of empirical objectivity, given the limits of that perspective. Impairment is maximised when the perspectives of one civilisation are applied to an object lying beyond its confines. For in order to do justice to such an object, the observer would have to transcend the confines of his own civilisation and apply to that object categories which transcend the confines of any particular civilisation and, hence, are applicable to all. This, however, is an epistemological impossibility. It is this impossibility which Mr. Toynbee has endeavoured to achieve.

The examination of but a few of Mr. Toynbee's basic concepts will show that it is impossible to verify them empirically, but that they must be validated philosophically if they are to be validated at all. The very concept of civilisation lacks empirical precision, once we leave behind the two extremes of primitivity and such generalisations as Western and Eastern civilisation, and share Mr. Toynbee's concern with the major historic civilisations. At what point can we say that a civilisation is autonomous, that it is a derivative "offshoot" of another, or that it has no autonomy of its own, being a mere variety of a dominant one? Obviously American civilisation is both distinct from, and similar to, British civilisation. An Englishman might well try to comprehend American civilisation in the terms of his own, or at best regard it as a mere "offshoot" of his own, while the American might assume its autonomy; for the Chinese observer, on the other hand, the differences between the two civilisations, obvious to both Englishman and American, might be hardly worthy of notice. From the point of view of imperial Rome, Roman civilisation was the culmination of the civilisation of Greece; for Hellenism it might very well have looked like Greek civilisation in a state of decay; and Western Christian civilisation has seen the civilisation of Greece and Rome as a mere preparation for itself. Can one speak of one Chinese civilisation as a continuum extending through the whole history of the Chinese state, or is it possible and necessary to speak of a number of civilisations following each other within the geographic and political space called China? Here again, the answer will differ according to the observer's perspective. There is no need to multiply examples in order to show that judgements about a civilisation are mere reflections of the valuations of a particular one. It is not by accident that there has been a tendency for history to be written in terms of political or geographic units rather than of civilisations; for the former lend themselves more readily to empirical verification than do the latter.

What is true of the very concept of civilisation applies also to the specific concepts referring to its alleged life cycle. What are the verifiable characteristics of the birth and death of a civilisation, when does it flower, when break down and disintegrate? Did the Greek, Roman, and Jewish civilisations ever die or were they but transferred by political circumstances from one geographic locale to another? If we should assume that Greek civilisation actually died, did it die through the degeneration of its inner life-substance, or was it killed, as it were, by military assassination, which in view of its own inner potentialities was a mere accident? If Western civilisation should dissolve tomorrow into radio-active rubble, would it have died a "natural" death because of inner exhaustion or would it have committed suicide in an isolated act of intellectual and moral degeneracy, or would it have been killed by an atomic assassin? If Western civilisation should be spared atomic destruction and if it should move into an age of material abundance, who is to prove scientifically that such a civilisation would be inferior, or for that matter superior, to, say, the 13th or 18th or 19th centuries of Western civilisation? The answers to all these questions obviously depend upon what we mean by civilisation. To speak again of Western civilisation only, there are those who see nothing but decay from the 15th century onwards; there are others who see nothing but darkness before the 15th century and nothing but decay from the 17th century onwards. For still others, Western civilisation culminates at the turn of the 19th century, while there are those for whom all history preceding Marx is a mere prescientific preparation for the self-emancipation of man.

THE concept of civilisation and of its different stages, then, which we apply to other civilisations, cannot but be a function of the valuations of one's own. The very simile of life and death has an objective, empirically verifiable meaning for biological units and is still susceptible of a high degree of empirical precision in the political sphere: a state or a

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party can be said to live and die. However, when we speak of the life and death of a nation as a cultural entity, we sacrifice, in a measure which will change with differing historic situations, empirical precision for a philosophic metaphor. That substitution of philosophic valuation for empirical science is bound to become total when we enter the realm of civilisation, which as a concept is a kind of synthesis of the valuations of a member of a particular civilisation. The appraisal of civilisations other than one's own is possible only through the erection of a partial world view into a philosophic system claiming universal validity. From Vico through Hegel and Comte to Marx, philosophy had the self-confidence to sit in judgement over all history and to assign to its different periods what appeared to be their rightful place. Our age has transferred its confidence from philosophy to science. Thus it must endeavour to prove scientifically what other ages have tried to demonstrate through philosophy.

This is the tragic paradox which Marx was still able to overcome by identifying philosophy and science, but before which Spengler and Toynbee could not but founder. For, unlike Marx, they have no philosophic system to fall back on which would lend their systems of valuations at least an element of rational objectivity. In this respect Mr. Toynbee is philosophically more sophisticated than Spengler. He is aware of the dilemma without being able to overcome it. Spengler, with that Hegelian consistency which takes absurd conclusions in its stride as long as they follow logically from premises, forces the history of civilisations into the biological strait-jacket and, again not unlike Hegel, finds in the apparent trends of the contemporary scene experimental proof for the pseudo-scientific premise of biological necessity.

Mr. Toynbee, with an intention as sweeping as any of the system-builders before him, has too much common sense to sacrifice the evidence of history on the altar of logical consistency. He allows for human creativity to modify, if not to stop altogether, the life cycle of all civilisations, and particularly of our own. Yet this concession to the unpredictability of history, which is a function of human freedom, faces Mr. Toynbee with still another dilemma. If a civilisation can escape its life cycle by an act of human will, if, in other words, it can refuse to die if it so wills and knows how to live for ever, what, then, is the cognitive value of the biological scheme? Is there a tendency in civilisations to die, which tendency can be reversed? Or were other civilisations bound to die while ours—faint echo of *Roma eterna*—might live for ever? Obviously, what Mr. Toynbee's concession to common sense has gained for history it has lost for philosophy.

It is a measure of Mr. Toynbee's philosophic sophistication that he not only allows human freedom to qualify, if not to disrupt, the determinism of the biological life cycle, but that he is also aware of the need for standards of evaluation which transcend the empirical sequence of biological phases. He does not, and cannot, find these standards in philosophy; for our age has lost the rational boldness and self-reliance which still allowed a Comte and a Marx to build a philosophic system which pretended to explain the laws by which history proceeds. Instead Mr. Toynbee turns to religion. By doing so, Mr. Toynbee raises three issues: the meaning of the return to religion, the value for civilisation of a return to religion, the ability of a civilisation to return to religion by an act of will.

MR. TOYNBEE'S claim that only religion can save Western civilisation coincides with a popular movement, especially strong in the United States, which also seeks in religion salvation from the evils and dangers of the times. Church membership is rising; prominent intellectuals are converted or return to the fold of their church; politicians justify themselves and their policies in religious terms; and the display of religious observances has begun to become standard practice for public men. Much of Mr. Toynbee's popularity in the United States can be attributed to the apparent convergence of his call for the renewal of religious faith with these popular tendencies. He is in danger of becoming a prophet of a new cult, a kind of Billy Graham of the eggheads.

This popularity is unjust to Mr. Toynbee's intent, but it illuminates the weakness of his achievement. Mr. Toynbee has no illusions about the impossibility of reviving a lost religious faith by joining or rejoining an established church. He calls not so much for a return to a particular established religion as for a revival of religious faith which might find confirmation in any established religion or a

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combination of elements of them. Mr. Toynbee's personal preference, if I understand him aright, seems to be a kind of intellectual and æsthetic eclecticism which open mindedly accepts and receives all that is congenial in the different historical religions.

However, this stress upon a new syncretic religion tends to obscure a distinction which is vital for the understanding of the religious problem and, in turn, has strengthened the popular misunderstanding of Mr. Toynbee's position to which we have just referred. This confusion concerns the distinction between religion and religiosity. It can well be argued —and I would support the argument—that most of the failures of the modern age and many of its accomplishments stem from one single source: the lack of religiosity. Modern man, as he sees himself, has become a self-sufficient entity who knows what he sees and can do what he wills. He has lost the awareness of his dependence upon a will and a power who are beyond his understanding and control. To warn modern man against the irreligious self-glorification, which in a sense is his self-mutilation, for it deprives human experience of mystery, tragedy and guilt, is one thing; to advocate a kind of religious eclecticism is quite another.

This distinction between religiosity and religion has a direct bearing upon the question which is central to Mr. Toynbee's concern and for the sake of which he has raised the issue of religion in the first place: What makes a civilisation live and what will enable our civilisation in particular to survive? Mr. Toynbee answers: Return to religion by reviving your religious faith. Yet this answer is open to serious doubt. The doubt arises not from metaphysical speculation but from the experience of history itself. Is there any historic evidence to show that religious ages are monopolistically or even especially productive of the values of civilisation, as commonly understood? And is there not rather overwhelming historic evidence in support of the proposition that the weakening of religious faith coincides with the flowering of civilisations, as commonly understood?

We are using the term "commonly understood" on purpose; for here the observer's subjective preference, as pointed out above, is bound to colour his judgement. If we assume that only religious civilisation is worthy of the name, it cannot be hard to demonstrate that the flowering of civilisation depends upon religious faith. Yet if we give to civilisation its common secular meaning, it can hardly be open to doubt that from Plato to Kant, from Sophocles to Dostoievsky, from Michelangelo to Rodin, the weakening of religious faith and the flowering of civilisation not only coincide in time but also are organically interconnected. It is true that these great achievements of civilisation owe their greatness to the religious experience of mystery, tragedy and guilt. Yet it must further be allowed that the achievements of material civilisation, in terms of rational control of nature and society, owe much, if not everything, to the modern denial of both religious faith and religiosity, which assumes the limitless powers of man and demonstrates them within self-chosen limits.

But even if it were true that the return to religious faith can save Western civilisation, can a civilisation recover its religious faith by an act of will? Here it is necessary, paradoxical as it may seem, to invoke the very spirit of religion against its most learned advocate. It requires nothing but an act of will to

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join a church and to perform its rituals. To have religious faith demands an act of grace, for which, however, man may well prepare himself through rational instruction. Religiosity, in turn, is the fruit of experience, more particularly of suffering, transformed into intellectual and moral awareness by mind and conscience.

The clarion calling a civilisation to return to religion, *en masse* as it were, finds, and must find, its response in an eclectic idolatry, often blasphemous in man's self-identification with the deity, which popularises the trappings of religion without reviving the dormant substance of its religiosity. To restore man to the fullness of his stature and thus give his civilisation a new lease on life requires indeed the teaching of men like Mr. Toynbee. Yet their teaching must seek to illuminate a mysterious, tragic and sinful experience common to all men in terms of a religiosity likewise common to all men. Neither a teacher nor a whole civilisation can by an act of will create the symbolic and ritualistic expressions of religiosity thus restored; least of all can they create them out of the fragments of religions, whose decline has made the restoration of religiosity necessary in the first place. What religions will grow from this new religiosity man must leave to fate. He must be content to be ready, and to make others ready, to see the signs and to read them aright when they appear.

What Mr. Toynbee has been trying to do as a philosopher of history could no longer be done in an age which tries to reduce truth to science. What Mr. Toynbee has been trying to do as a herald of religious faith no man could have achieved in any age. One hundred years ago he might have been the last of the great philosophers of history. Four hundred years ago he might have been the last of the great scholastics—or mystics. Such achievements are not for this age. Yet Mr. Toynbee's Icarean effort does for our age what the great representative works of the mind have done for others. It both presents its spirit and attempts to transcend it in the search for the perennial truths by which all ages must be judged. His achievement belongs to the ages; his failure belongs to his own and, hence, is ours as well as his.

Hans J. Morgenthau

Other Books

Anna Cora. The Life and Theatre of Anna Cora Mowatt. By ERIC WOLLENCOTT BARNES. Secker and Warburg. 25s.

To feel excitement—whether about a person, picture, place or book—and then find almost no one in agreement with you, is disconcerting. In the case of Mr. Eric Barnes's biography of Anna Cora Mowatt, I find it positively alarming. The praise *Anna Cora* has received from the English press is faint enough to keep this fascinating, long-forgotten woman on the shelf from which Mr. Barnes has been at such pains to bring her down.

Who was Anna Cora Mowatt? In New York recently I met only one person who knew and he was Van Wyck Brooks who probably possesses a greater knowledge of his country's literary history than any other man alive. Webster's biographical dictionary gives Mrs. Mowatt eight lines, describing her as "writer and actress." Elsewhere she has been called, and correctly, a pioneer in the American theatre. As little more than a girl, Anna Cora was the first American of her sex to give public readings of poetry. In her twenties she wrote and had a triumphant success with the first American play of merit (*Fashion*, revived in London in 1929). Within the year the playwright had turned actress, being the first "lady" to appear on the American stage.

As an actress Mrs. Mowatt took America by storm, playing to packed houses all over the country as well as in Dublin and London. What is worthy of note is that, unlike many a career woman of our day, she launched seriously upon a life of intense activity neither from loneliness, unhappiness, nor ambition, but out of dire necessity. Had she not set herself to pour out romantic novels, books on cookery, housekeeping, embroidery, the etiquette of ballroom dancing, an autobiography, and countless articles on travel, she and her husband—who lost his health and his wealth and his eyesight soon after their marriage—would have starved.

These achievements, however, whether in literature, journalism or the theatre, seem to me of less interest today than the personality of

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this frail, courageous woman and the world in which she lived her hectic life—the world, above all, of mid-19th-century Boston and New York, whose atmosphere Mr. Barnes has reconstructed in such fascinating detail. It is this background to the life of Mrs. Mowatt, interspersed with selections from her own writings and those of her relations and contemporaries, which makes nonsense of the assertion of one reviewer that in Mr. Barnes's hands *Anna Cora* should appeal to "those with a taste for good, big, lush historical romance." If Anna Cora's life happened to possess many of the ingredients of popular historical fiction, that is surely the fault neither of her biographer nor his subject. As for "lush," the implication is both inept and unfair, giving a false impression of a balanced, carefully-documented work.

Only in her youth was Anna Cora free for any length of time from ill-health. The ninth of fourteen children, she grew up in what would be paradise to any child: a château near Bordeaux. Her father, Samuel Ogden, was a "gentleman" adventurer whose credit was such that he could lose all he possessed and promptly raise sufficient funds to start a business importing wine from France. It was on a voyage from that country to New York—when she was seven and could speak no English—that Anna Cora contracted the bronchial condition which slowly killed her. Should anyone wish to know what it was like to cross the Atlantic in the 1820's, let him read her eldest brother's account of how the family first spent 22 days in a storm in the Bay of Biscay (during which one brother was swept overboard and drowned), and then at the second attempt took 40 days to reach New York. Within seven years of her arrival, Anna Cora had eloped, virtually from the nursery, with James Mowatt, a wealthy New York lawyer twice as old as herself. The couple set up house at Flatbush, four miles from New York. Here, although a married woman of sixteen "with a position in society and mistress of a large country house," Mrs. Mowatt was often to be found "gleefully rolling hoops in the driveway." At night she either studied philosophy with her husband or wrote reams of atrocious poetry (a volume of which, nevertheless, was published and won a prize).

The carefree days at Flatbush, however, were not to last long. Anna Cora soon fell so ill from consumption that she was not expected

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to live; her husband's eyes began to fail and by 1841 he had lost his entire fortune in the "crash" following the financial reforms of Jackson's administration. It was then, after the first of many miraculous recoveries, that Anna Cora saved the desperate situation (and outraged Boston society) by getting up in public and reciting poetry. But the strain of having continually to face hostile New England audiences proved too much for her. "This time," writes Mr. Barnes, "Anna Cora's case was beyond the reach of any treatment that (her doctor) as an orthodox practitioner might have been able to prescribe." This Anna Cora knew, and for this reason "early in 1842 she turned to mesmerism."

The following chapter, in which Anna Cora continues for more than two weeks to go through all the functions of daily living while in "the somnambulic state," and in which both she and James become ardent Swedenborgians, makes fascinating reading. It also contains in its few pages the essence of America of that period. It was the America of Mary Baker Eddy (who is never mentioned), of "mesmeric healers and animal-magnetisers . . . holding forth in halls, in empty shops . . . and in respectable consulting rooms," an America which, "in the most varied ways—ranging from the Transcendental contemplation of the Over-Soul to the emotional orgies of the Methodists—was striving to express its inner life."

Mr. Barnes has been accused by all his critics of writing too long a book about this forgotten actress of a century ago. Here I am inclined to agree: Anna Cora Mowatt herself did not perhaps deserve so many pages. But to have cut this biography would have been to run the risk of spoiling for us a panorama of a U.S.A. which in England today is probably not so much forgotten as unknown. *James Stern*

The Lakers. *Adventures of the First Tourists.* By NORMAN NICHOLSON. Robert Hale. 18s.

The Lakers is the title of an unperformed opera whose characters were tourists in search of the picturesque. These characters, an invention of the 18th century, were already, by the middle of the 19th, arriving in force, horses and carriages plying their way across the tidal estuary of Morecambe Bay. Tourists have long been a mainstay of Lake-district economy; now, although mountain-snobs (Auden's phrase) are occasionally to be seen about Great Gable, and Wordsworthian Bishops at the Patterdale sheep-dog trials, most present-day Lakers come in charabancs or on bicycles, and the hikers on a fine day have to queue for Striding Edge. As a new National park, it is fitting that the Lake-district economy should become a valuable adjunct to industrial town-life; and those who complain that the place is "spoilt" are for the most part only Lakers of an earlier phase. The process of "spoiling," if such it is, has been going on for a very long time.

Mr. Nicholson is emphatically not a Laker. He is a native of Millom, which lies just outside the picturesque region; and he casts on three centuries of tourists the cold humorous eye of the native who asked an early Laker: "Ith name oh fackins wot a broughten you here?" He watches Lakers come and go, confident that the fells will outlast them all.

Early among these came Celia Fiennes, garrulous as a 17th century Gertrude Stein, but perceptive because the rules of what ought to be thought and felt in the presence of these pieces of Nature had not yet been laid down. Gray, with his Claude-glass to reflect in miniature mountains that seemed larger in those days than they do now, brought his own refined taste with him.

The first traveller who "found God to be a God both of the hills and valleys, and nowhere more present than in the mountains of Cumberland" was John Wesley. "It is," Mr. Nicholson notes, "a remark that might have been made some forty or fifty years later by another man from the same town (Cockermouth) but how different, then, would have been its implication. To Wordsworth the fell country was the one place above all others in which to seek for God; to Wesley it was the last place where you would expect to find him." The cult of the picturesque was in full swing, however, before Wordsworth made the Lake-district into a sort of shrine of 19th century nature-worship. William Gilpin, clergyman and landscape painter, laid down the rules of the picturesque for the next three generations. Anne Radcliffe came and projected upon the fells her tame terrors in the style of Italian landscape paintings. (It is a pity that no Richard Wilson and no Constable ever painted in Cumberland; one or two David Joneses at present in the Tate are perhaps the

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best paintings of the Lake district that have been made, unless Winifred Nicholson's farmsteads and flowerscapes so qualify.) But the Lake district stands to this day for most of us as the great monument of the genius of Wordsworth.

"There are two sorts of tourists: those who return home and those who stay, and the latter are the more destructive." Mr. Nicholson has the right to write this; for what the schoolbooks so glibly call the Lake Poets were, but for the Wordsworths, an artists' colony, no more belonging to the Lake District than the present-day St. Ives school of painters belong to Cornwall. Coleridge came to be near the Wordsworths, Southey came to share Greta Hall with Coleridge, and de Quincey came, an uninvited bohemian (Mr. Nicholson does not seem to sense the element of intrusion in de Quincey's arrival, which very largely justifies the Wordsworth family's cold treatment of him). Of them all, Dorothy Wordsworth was, and remained, the most inside the landscape and the way of life. Mr. Nicholson very acutely observes that, as the years went by, Wordsworth became increasingly an alien in his own countryside, associating more and more with tourists and distinguished visitors, less and less with the natives. Southey, with his genteel picnics, never took root at all. Coleridge was out of his element and the climate did not suit him. But he brought to the fells, as Gray did, his own genius, and, but for Dorothy Wordsworth, has left the finest prose descriptions that there are of Lake-district scenery. His breakneck descent of Scafell may not have been a distinguished feat of mountaineering, and certainly any dalesman could have pointed out to him a safer route, but his account of it justifies all. Yet Wordsworth alone remains as the recorder of a vision whose roots go deeper into the country than his personal genius alone; and even he, in writing a Guide to the Lake-district, seems to hand over the native inheritance of his countryside to the Lakers.

Norman Nicholson does not go beyond Ruskin. He spares us Hugh Walpole; but I could have wished that he had paid a passing tribute to that last and best of Lakers, Beatrix Potter, whose Sawry is now as firmly implanted in popular imagination as Wordsworth's Ambleside. But since this book with its critical acumen (though I could wish that critics nowadays were less glib in their assertion

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that Dorothy Wordsworth was "in love" with Coleridge, whatever that may mean) and shrewd humour seems designed rather for the clergyman on vacation than for his less leisured wife, the omission is not serious. This is not a work of scholarship, but a very readable book to dip into on a wet afternoon on a Lakeland holiday. *Kathleen Raine*

God's Country and Mine. By JACQUES BARZUN. Gollancz. 18s.

Professor Barzun's highly intelligent studies on 19th century romanticism have been much appreciated by European readers. One doubts that *God's Country and Mine* will be similarly welcome. As a French scholar settled in America, Mr. Barzun found the facile anti-Americanism of Frenchmen still on the Left Bank more than he could stomach. Unfortunately, in his retort he has allowed irritation to betray him into equally loose generalisation and a regrettable way of "writing down." Thus, the imaginary European critics against whom Mr. Barzun defends his adopted America, like his soulful Frau Schlagobers from Vienna, are in turn only dreary caricatures hailing from a Hollywood Europe, full of gables and domestic servants, and with apparently no statutory holidays or other labour legislation. At one point in his retort Mr. Barzun writes: "It would make a European shudder or burst out laughing if you told him that one of our great artistic achievements in the United States has been to make pretty clothes cheap enough for all young women to buy." Though they may not shudder, many readers will be baffled by such a use of "artistic"—couldn't Mr. Barzun have remained content with merely a "great achievement?"

Again, Mr. Barzun defends the United States oil companies who turn marauding Saudi Arabians into skilled mechanics on regular wages—"Is that such a dreadful, immoral transformation?" No, of course not, but that isn't the point, which is that, by and large, American business abroad has not been very successful in promoting either social stability or genuine social progress—not yet, at least, and perhaps least of all in areas where American business interests are most dominant, such as Arabia or Central America. Or still again, Mr. Barzun claims for the American radio that it brought Americans a large repertoire of classical music as early as the Great Depression, "whereas in Britain which has the advantage of talent and monopoly, the Third Programme dates from 1946." Could Mr. Barzun be unaware that the BBC Symphony Orchestra and BBC Concerts existed before that date? It reads rather like it.

All in all, American culture surely stands on firm enough ground to need no such superficial defence. *T. R. Fyvel*

About our Authors

NICOLA CHIAROMONTE regularly writes on films and the stage for the Italian weekly, *Il Mondo*. . . . ALAN RIDDELL is the editor of the Scottish literary magazine, *Lines*. . . . KAY CICELLIS' novel, *Death of a Town*, was published by Harvill Press last year. . . . HOWARD GRIFFIN is a young American poet who has contributed to *Partisan Review* and other periodicals. . . . MICHAEL POLANYI is Professor of Social Studies at the University of Manchester. This essay, like Raymond Aron's essay on "Nations and Ideologies" in our January issue, is a preliminary paper for a conference on "The Future of Freedom" which will be convened in Milan this coming September by the Congress for Cultural Freedom. . . . DAVID SYLVESTER's article in last September's ENCOUNTER has just been awarded a prize, sponsored by the Ente Provinciale per il Turismo and the Ente Autonomo della Biennale, for the best foreign criticisms of the 1954 Venice Biennale. . . . FRANCES CORNFORD's *Collected Poems*, published by Cresset Press, was the choice of the Poetry Book Society last October. . . . PETER SCHMID is a Swiss journalist whose reports are published regularly in *Die Weltwoche* and other Swiss newspapers. . . . CLINTON ROSSITER is Professor of Government at Cornell University. . . . MARJORIE GRENE, who formerly taught philosophy at the University of Chicago, is now living in Ireland. She is the author of *Dreadful Freedom*, an analysis of modern existentialist philosophy. . . . KENICHI YOSHIDA, son of the ex-Prime Minister, is one of the leading authorities on English literature in Japan. He has translated T. S. Eliot into Japanese, and his history of English literature is a standard work in that country. . . . HANS J. MORGENTHAU is Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago. . . . JAMES STERN is well known for his short stories and for his translations from the German.

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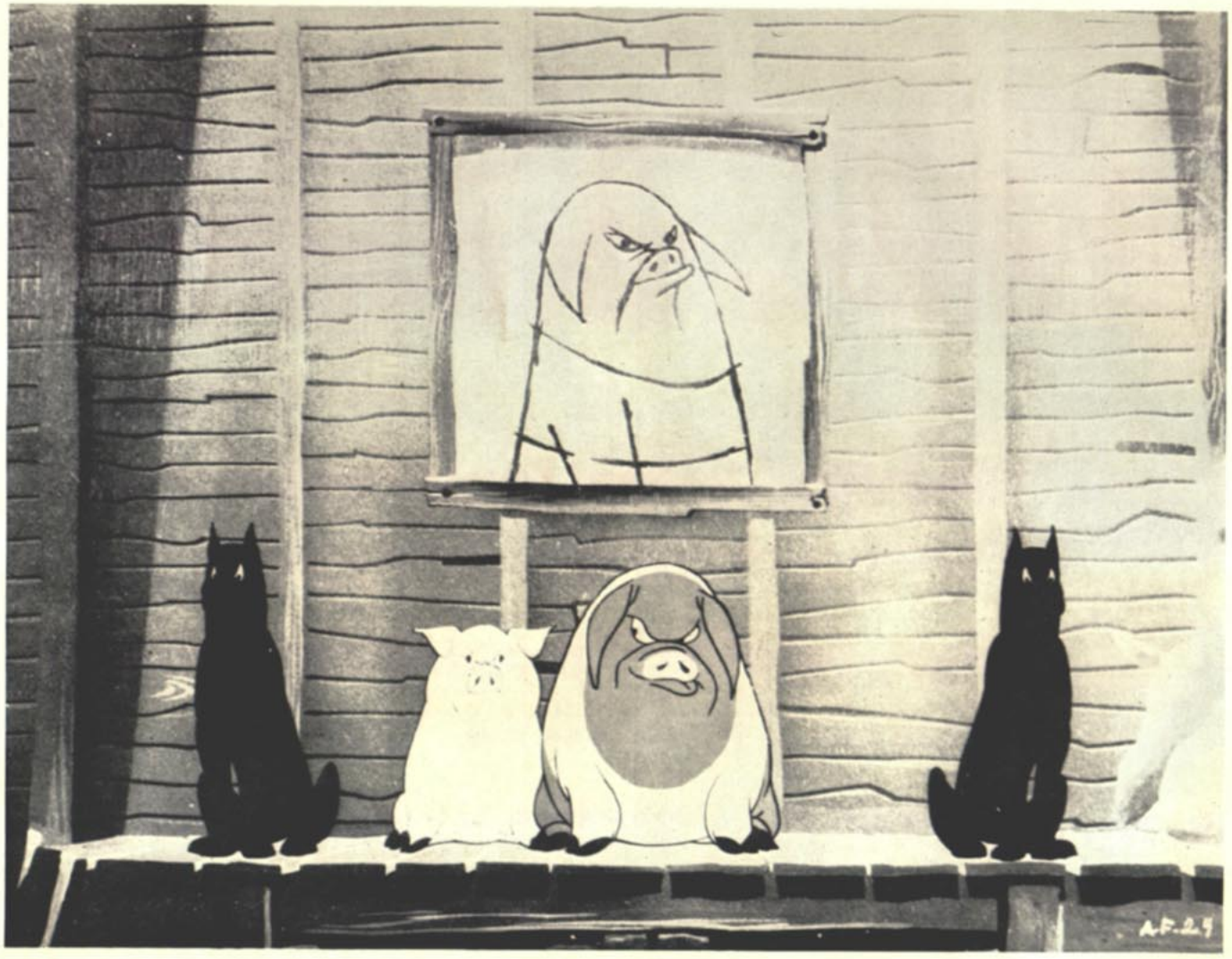

Napoleon, Squealer and attendant dogs

From the Halas and Batchelor cartoon film 'Animal Farm'

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Refugees boarding a Transport

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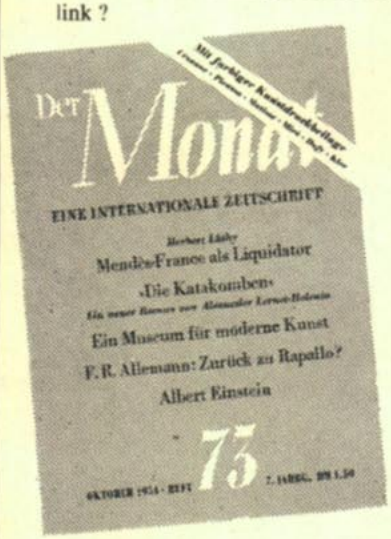

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